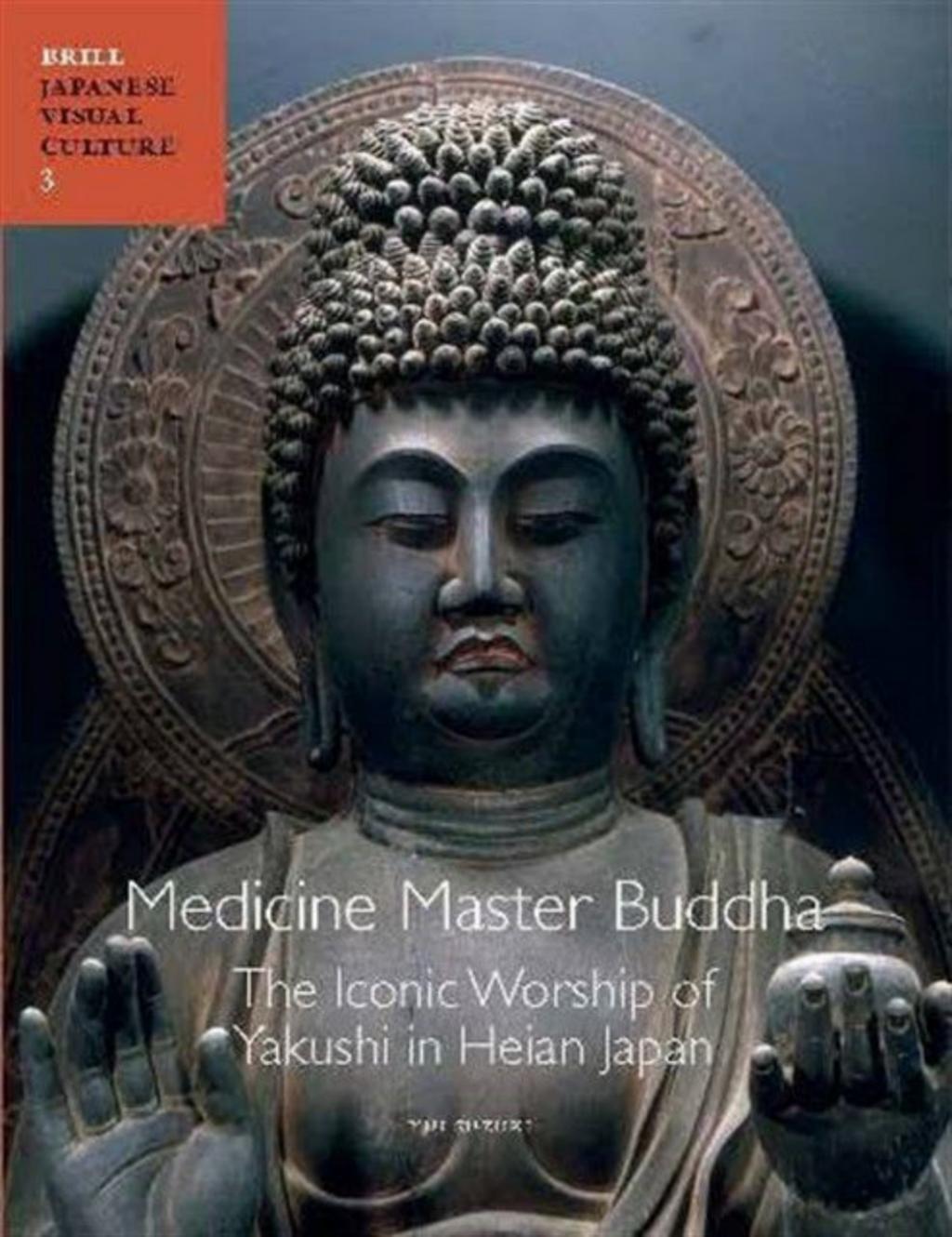


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# Medicine Master Buddha

The Iconic Worship of  
Yakushi in Heian Japan

YUKI SIZUKI

MEDICINE MASTER BUDDHA:  
THE ICONIC WORSHIP OF YAKUSHI IN HEIAN JAPAN

JAPANESE VISUAL CULTURE

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# Medicine Master Buddha: The Iconic Worship of Yakushi in Heian Japan

BY  
YUI SUZUKI



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Detail of fig. 33. *Standing Yakushi*. 9th century. Wood, single-block construction, with touches of polychrome. H. 169.7 cm. Jingoji, Kyoto Prefecture.

*For my parents,  
Hisako and Noriyuki Suzuki*



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# A Note to the Reader

Wherever necessary, Japanese (J:), Sanskrit (S:), and Chinese (C:) terms (romanized in *pinyin*) are placed in parentheses next to their English translations. Foreign-language terms are assumed to be Japanese unless otherwise designated. Certain commonly used Sanskrit terms that have entered the English language (such as *sūtra*) are rendered

in roman type without diacritical marks. Depending on the context, names of Buddhist deities may be written in Sanskrit transliteration (for example, Bhaiṣajyaguru) or in Japanese (Yakushi). Romanized Japanese (and in some cases, Chinese) titles are given for sutras alongside their English titles.



# Prologue

**A**LL RELIGIONS SEEK TO alleviate pain and suffering, unavoidable conditions of human existence. As the sociologist Joseph H. Fichter remarked in his classic study *Religion and Pain*, “Life is full of uncertainties. People tend to die at the wrong time; sickness seems to occur when it is most inconvenient; accidents are by definition unexpected. These phenomena entail ultimate problems because they often have no this-worldly explanation.”<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the first and foremost of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhist doctrine is that “life is suffering,” and that happiness, by implication, is unsustainable. Even in our contemporary society with its sophisticated science and technology, disease and death constantly remind us that these experiences are inevitable, painful, and beyond our control. Therefore, people seek healing in a variety of ways—often soliciting the assistance of higher powers—to make sense of the unknown and the incomprehensible.

In Mahāyāna Buddhism (the form of Buddhism dominant in East Asia), many sutras and treatises deal with disease and illness by suggesting a variety of remedies, such as surgical procedures or healing through herbs, foods, and medicinal potions. The *Sutra of Golden Light* (S: *Suvarṇaprabhāsottama-sūtra*), for example, contains two chapters dedicated to medicine and healing.<sup>2</sup> Buddhist teachings also expound on the spiritual causes of illness and explain the healing process as a kind of spiritual growth, encouraging people to worship those particular Buddhas and bodhisattvas called healers and “Kings of Medicine.”<sup>3</sup> It is therefore not surprising that in the Buddhist tradition, a deity associated directly with medicine and healing would emerge as a savior to rescue devotees from their insufferable circumstances. For Buddhists

throughout Asia, this Supreme Being was Bhaiṣajyaguru, the “Medicine” or “Healing” Buddha, known for alleviating suffering and restoring health, both for individuals and the nation.

According to Mahāyāna philosophy, the myriad types of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and other celestial deities were a “skillful means” (*hōben*) through which sentient beings could attain enlightenment. Although the ultimate goal of Buddhism was liberation of spirit and body through enlightenment, in reality, most people turned to Buddhist deities to find immediate, practical solutions to their inexplicable predicaments and worldly problems.

The devotional cult of Yakushi 藥師 (C: Yaoshi; literally, “medicine master”), as Bhaiṣajyaguru is known in Japan, includes a set of specific practices and beliefs linked with this deity. This cult was one of the first to develop in Japan after Buddhism was introduced during the sixth century. Worship of the Medicine Buddha first developed in Central Asia during the late third century, and was transmitted to China along the Silk Route during the early fourth. From China, it reached other parts of East Asia, including the Korean peninsula. It is from there that the cult entered the Japanese archipelago, taking root firmly by the end of the seventh century.

Like most Buddhist phenomena, the cult of Yakushi was a continental import that interacted and blended with native beliefs, dispositions, and practices over the centuries, developing its own distinctive Japanese imprint. By the Nara period (710–794), court elites—including emperors and their consorts—commissioned the making of monumental Yakushi images and enshrined them in grand Buddhist temples built in the capital. The Nara aristocracy turned to the powers of Yakushi to cure their physical ailments.

It was during the Heian period (794–1185) that the cult of Yakushi truly flourished. This transformation is clearly exemplified in material culture by

the exceedingly high number of extant Yakushi images from this period, as compared to other Buddhist images. Not only were these icons enshrined in large temples of imperial or aristocratic lineage, but some were also placed in more humble monastic settings and in private temples far from the capital. Throughout all areas of Japan, from the southern island of Kyushu to the northernmost part of the mainland, the explosive increase in the production of Yakushi images in the ninth and tenth centuries indicates that the devotional cult was no longer exclusive to the ruling elite, but was also beginning to reach the lower echelons of society.

The reason for Yakushi's widespread success lies in his compatibility with *genze riyaku*, the promise of "this-worldly benefits" that can be obtained through the simple act of asking a deity.<sup>4</sup> From the beginning of his introduction to Japanese society, this particular Buddha was not approached by the devotee in order to gain universal truth or transcendental wisdom. Rather, the majority of the population considered him a magical divinity who could deliver worshippers from suffering by providing positive physical or material results, such as healing, success, wealth, and increased personal well-being, to name a few.<sup>5</sup> Ian Reader and George J. Tanabe, Jr. have asserted that the concept and practice of *genze riyaku* is "central to, and permeates the entire Japanese religious structure."<sup>6</sup> Although Reader and Tanabe are referring here to contemporary Japan and the prevalence of *genze riyaku* in Japanese religious traditions, this reliance on Buddhist deities for receiving worldly benefits already was a normative and central element of the Yakushi cult in Heian Japan.

A large corpus of modern scholarship in Japanese on Nara and Heian Yakushi statues has contributed greatly to our understanding of the styles and techniques employed in individual masterpieces, as well as the historical links of such images to well-established temples.<sup>7</sup> For example, Yakushi icons studied in association with the famous temples Yakushiji and Hōryūji (both in Nara) have prompted scholarly interest and disputes about

their provenance and date of production. Although these are relevant issues in art history, the original cultic context of the images has largely been ignored. Such studies have not yet examined the significance of Yakushi icons in the context of this Buddha's devotional cult.

This oversight also can be explained by the way in which Heian Buddhist art has been portrayed in general, stemming from the development of two major religious movements: Esoteric (Tendai and Shingon) and Pure Land Buddhism. Consequently, the works of art that emerged from these movements have been the major objects of scholarly interest. Since Yakushi images do not fit neatly into this model of development, scholars have not considered them as an integral component of Heian Buddhist art. Although there are hundreds of extant Heian Yakushi images, many of which are designated as National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties, contemporary art history textbooks in English only mention one or two such statues; Penelope Mason's standard textbook *History of Japanese Art*, for example, only discusses the Yakushi statues from Jingōji and Daigoji in Kyoto.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, illuminating the primacy of Yakushi images in the context of the Medicine Buddha's devotional cult is long overdue.

Considering that the cult of Yakushi was one of the earliest to reach Japan and blossom there, it is surprising that only scant scholarly attention has been directed to the topic, even in the fields of Japanese history and religion. Gorai Shigeru (1908–1993), a historian of Japanese religion, and Nishio Masahito (b. 1956), a historian, have published seminal studies on Yakushi worship (*Yakushi shinkō*).<sup>9</sup> Gorai asserts that this topic has been eclipsed by studies of the cult of the Buddha Amida (S: Amitābha), often portrayed as the prevailing paradigm in the religion of the late Heian and Kamakura (1185–1333) periods. The cult of Amida also had a strong affiliation with Pure Land Buddhism, developing within its Jōdo, Jōdo Shin, and Ji sects. Gorai claims that the Yakushi cult never belonged to a particular Buddhist sect, its worship and icons therefore remaining outside the scope of scholarly

interest. While I agree with Gorai on these points, my major discovery is that the cult of Yakushi did, in fact, thrive throughout the Heian period. This surge in Yakushi worship was augmented by one man's personal connection to the deity and a statue that he purportedly carved out of sacred wood with his own hands. This man was none other than the monk Saichō (767–822), the founding father of the Tendai school of Japanese Buddhism. As I argue in this book, the cult of Yakushi and its icons found a particularly rich and complex expression through Saichō's personal endorsement of the deity, and subsequently through the Tendai school.

Despite the significant contributions made by Gorai and Nishio, what is lacking in these studies is a detailed attention to the salient role of Yakushi *images* in relation to the cultic worship of the deity. The scholarly works on Yakushi worship to date do not acknowledge the primacy of the role of the Buddhist icon as occupying a central position within Japanese Buddhist practices. In contrast, I contend that icon veneration is of central importance; as Robert H. Sharf asserts, “The spread of Buddhism throughout East Asia, in short, was coterminous with the spread of sacred icons.”<sup>10</sup> An examination of the theology surrounding Yakushi, as dictated in the sutras, is insufficient for illustrating that Yakushi icons were a significant part of the Japanese cultural and religious landscape in the late Nara period and throughout the Heian. This book pays special attention to analyzing Yakushi icons, revealing a much more nuanced picture of a foreign devotional cult that was assimilated and completely transformed into a Japanese artistic idiom.

Some explanation of the terms *statue*, *icon*, and *image* is necessary here. These terms are used somewhat interchangeably in this book, but they do have slightly different implications and meanings. *Statue*, the most specific of the three terms, means “a carved or cast figure of a person or animal, especially one that is life-size or larger.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, *statue* is used when I am discussing technical or stylistic issues (e.g., the material or carving technique of a particular sculpture), or when it is the most appropriate translation of a term in a

primary or secondary written source. *Statue* is therefore employed most frequently throughout this book when the object is being considered in art historical or aesthetic terms. *Image* is used in a much broader, generic sense to denote a “representation of an external form of a person or thing in sculpture, painting, etc.”<sup>12</sup> It is also used in this book to mean a likeness or representation of a person, thing, or concept.

The term *icon* is, in one sense, a specific type of image. A Buddhist icon can be a painting, a statue, or an object that represents or embodies some aspect of the deity that it represents. In Buddhism, however, the icon is not merely a representation of a deity, but also its physical embodiment or manifestation.<sup>13</sup> It is also the focus of ritual. The Buddhist icon therefore has “the ability to partake or share in the very nature of the divine. They are ‘animated’ through ritual, liturgy as well as narrative and myth.”<sup>14</sup> It is this idea of the “animate” icon—the notion of icon as active agent rather than passive object—that is underscored in this book, where the various processes through which the Buddhist icon comes alive (be it socially or ritually) are considered.<sup>15</sup> The Buddhist icon constantly shifts between object and agent, representation and deity, materialization of the divine and vehicle of the sacred. In this regard, *icon* is perhaps the most ambiguous and complex of the three terms.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

Chapter One, “The Formation of the Yakushi Cult,” charts the early origins and development of the Yakushi cult in Japan, from the second half of the seventh century to its full expression in the capital at Nara during the eighth century. During this time, the Yakushi cult was limited in scope and geography to the centers of power. Yakushi icons were produced with the support of the imperial court or other high elites for their personal benefit, mainly to seek cures for life-threatening illnesses. In the latter half of the eighth century, however, this particular function began to shift towards a

concern for the larger welfare of the country. This chapter provides a backdrop for the succeeding chapters, which illuminate how the cult flowered in the Heian period.

Chapter Two, “The Magical Yakushi: Spirit Pacifier and Healer-God,” examines the various social and political factors that led to the burgeoning of the Yakushi cult and the widespread production of its images in the Heian period. The ninth century, in particular, was a time when profound social, political, and religious transformations took place in Japan. These changes and innovations had a marked effect in spreading the cult of Yakushi and its icons to a larger geographical area and wider segment of society. Furthermore, in contrast to the Yakushi worship of the late seventh and eighth centuries, during this period the deity was revered for his powers to placate malevolent spirits and other calamity-causing entities. His apotropaic powers were activated during ritual performances, particularly in the Buddhist repentance rite called *Yakushi keka*. This was the major rite performed by the state and religious practitioners throughout the early Heian period.

On the one hand, Yakushi worship did not spread because of its strong sectarian affiliation, in the way that Amida worship was disseminated through the various Pure Land sects of the Kamakura period. But on the other, I assert in the remaining chapters that the leaders of the Tendai school played a primary role in spreading the cultic worship of the deity through the active production of Yakushi icons and their use in Tendai rituals.

Chapter Three, “Saichō’s Standing Yakushi and Its Iconic Legacy,” resurrects the lost Yakushi statue that was a personal devotional icon belonging to Saichō. According to hagiographical accounts, this icon was a standing Yakushi that Saichō carved from a sacred piece of wood in the forests of Mt. Hiei (Ōtsu, Shiga Prefecture). This standing image had a very personal and special meaning for Saichō. As his monastic sanctuary of Enryakuji on Mt. Hiei grew and developed, the statue was eventually enshrined in the main worship hall as its principal icon of worship. I explore both the ritual

function and iconographical significance encoded in the figure’s standing pose, which reflected very different religious ideals from those represented by the seated Yakushi images found in Nara.

After Saichō’s death, his standing Yakushi icon, enshrined in Enryakuji’s Central Hall (Konpon Chūdō), became an object that embodied the memory of the great teacher as the founder of the Tendai school. Pierre Nora has described how buildings can become “sites of memory” (*lieux de mémoire*), crystallizing and preserving communal heritage.<sup>16</sup> In the same vein, the standing wood Yakushi can be considered as such, evoking Saichō’s memory and strengthening the Tendai community and identity.

Chapter Four, “Replicating Memory: Extant Images of the Saichō-Enryakuji Lineage,” explores how and why multiple standing Yakushi icons were copied from Saichō’s original and then enshrined in Enryakuji’s Central Hall. I demonstrate how Saichō’s personal Yakushi statue became a “specific, precisely defined prototype” that served as a source for repeated replication.<sup>17</sup> Saichō’s successors, the Tendai ecclesiastics, promoted this Yakushi image as an auspicious icon of their lineage. Copies of the image came to be enshrined in Tendai-associated temples across the provinces, and created a strong link back to Enryakuji and Saichō. As a consequence, the cultic worship of Yakushi continued to flourish throughout the Heian period, with Enryakuji as the driving force behind the steady dissemination of its icons. To illustrate this process concretely, I examine several Yakushi icons from the Heian period—both lost and extant—and propose that these inherited the spiritual legacy of Saichō and his icon of the deity.

Chapter Five, “Reflections on the Jingōji Yakushi and the Saichō Connection,” considers an important ninth-century Yakushi figure from the temple of Jingōji in Kyoto. For decades this image has been the subject of heated debate among art historians in regard to its provenance and dating. Jingōji’s later affiliation with the Shingon school has obscured its initial ties to Saichō, instead highlighting the later connection of Kūkai (774–835) with the temple. In this chapter, I shift the focus of

analysis from provenance to a consideration of Saichō's close involvement with Jingōji's patrons, Wake no Matsuna and Hiroyo, and his possible role in the production of this Yakushi icon.

Finally, Chapter Six, "The Magnificent Seven: Shichibutsu Yakushi Icons and Ritual," takes up the role of Yakushi icons in the Esoteric Ritual of the Seven Yakushi (*Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*), an elaborate ceremony monopolized by the Tendai school. The effectiveness and success of this Esoteric ritual as perceived by the aristocracy guaranteed the continued popularity of the Yakushi cult and promoted the production of its images well into the late Heian period. In fact, as the Tendai school grew in both scale and authority, it began to compete proactively with other Buddhist schools for aristocratic patronage. This rivalry and competition were played out in the realms of icon production and ritual. In this chapter, I carefully consider the associated changes in the fundamental nature of the cult of Yakushi and in the variety of its patrons. The chapter's final section examines the details of the ritual process, including how the seven Yakushi icons were arranged in the ceremonial space.

This book does not claim, nor is it intended, to be a comprehensive analysis of Medicine Buddha worship and its sculptural images within Japan. The devotional cult of Yakushi and its icons defies placement into a neat analytical framework; rather,

Yakushi worship was characterized by multifariousness as it found religious and artistic expression on Japanese soil. No single analysis can reveal this heterogeneity. Even the terms "Yakushi worship" and "Yakushi cult" are somewhat misleading, due to their emphasis on singularity. Nevertheless, these terms are used throughout this book, in order to maintain an intellectual cohesiveness.

Instead, this study focuses more precisely on a distinctive feature of the iconic worship of Yakushi that materialized within the context of Saichō and the Tendai school. Buddhist cults that entered Japan during the early propagation of Buddhism on the Japanese archipelago were foreign imports from the continent. Once the images, texts, and ritual practices reached Japanese soil, however, they quickly took root and changed shape, interacting with native political, religious, and cultural circumstances to produce a Japanese version, in this case, of Yakushi worship. Charting the development of the cult of Yakushi over time illuminates its salient role in Japanese Buddhist practices and liturgy. By situating Yakushi images in the social, political, and ritual context of Heian Japan, this book aims to provide a piece that has been missing from the larger phenomena of Heian religious and artistic culture. Most importantly, it validates the role of icons and their veneration, for both spiritual and worldly gains, as a central theme of Japanese religiosity.



# The Formation of the Yakushi Cult

**YAKUSHI, THE BUDDHA** Bhaisajyaguru, has played a prominent role in East Asia since the third century CE. Known as Yao-shi Fo in China, Yaksa Yōrae in Korea, sangs-rgyas sman bla in Tibet, and Otochi in Mongolia, the cult surrounding this deity first flourished in China from the late sixth to the eighth century. It was then transmitted first to the Korean peninsula and later to the Japanese archipelago. Material evidence of the Bhaisajyaguru cult in China can be found at Buddhist sites such as Longmen and Dunhuang.<sup>1</sup> The numerous paintings of Bhaisajyaguru and his Lapis Lazuli Pure Land at Dunhuang demonstrate that this Buddha had a faithful following during the Sui (581–618) and Tang (618–907) periods.<sup>2</sup> In Korea, a few extant images from the Three Kingdoms era (57 BCE–668 CE) and a substantial number of granite, gilt bronze, and iron statues from the Unified Silla period (668–935) attest to his popularity.<sup>3</sup> Although the cult of Yakushi arrived much later in Japan than on the continent, it became a dominant force in Japanese Buddhism. This chapter explores the lineage of the Yakushi cult as it extended to Japan, particularly its early origins and development during the seventh and eighth centuries.

Concrete evidence of Yakushi worship in Japan may be found in the last quarter of the seventh century. In this period, the imperial court broke the

Soga clan's control over Buddhism and began mobilizing its efforts to unify Japan with this new religion. Many of the Buddhist temples and images commissioned by the court were motivated by political efforts to bring Buddhism under state control, and to increase the sacral authority of the reigning sovereign. The large-scale Yakushi images in Nara temples such as Yakushiji and Yamadadera commissioned by Emperor Tenmu (r. 673–686) appear to reflect such political incentives. Nevertheless, in this chapter I argue that these commissions reveal a more personal preoccupation with issues such as healing and well-being. Such private matters were played out on a grandiose, public scale through these magnificent visual monuments.

Buddhism came under increasing state patronage in the eighth century, especially during the rule of Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–749) and his principal consort, Kōmyō (701–760). In analyzing eighth-century Buddhist practices, scholars generally emphasize Shōmu and Kōmyō's grand-scale projects designed to unify the state. For example, Shōmu passed an imperial edict commanding the establishment of state monasteries (*kokubunji*) and nunneries (*kokubunniji*) in every province. He also constructed Tōdaiji, which became the head temple in Nara of the state monasteries, and commissioned a colossal sixteen-meter gilt-bronze statue of the Buddha Birushana (S: Vairocana) for its Daibutsuden (Great Buddha Hall)—at the time, one of the largest wooden structures in the world. This great Cosmic Buddha, extending its powers

*Seated Yakushi*. Hōrinji, detail of fig. 3.

over the entire country, was a visual statement of Shōmu's empire.

During the eighth century the central government also ordered Buddhist rituals—especially those rites dealing with penitence—to be performed with greater frequency for the sake of the entire nation. In such a climate, Yakushi ascended in status as a major healing deity protecting the country; consequently, the rituals associated with Yakushi became more publicly prominent. No longer used solely for the private healing of individuals (as during the reign of Emperor Tenmu), Yakushi rituals for Emperor Shōmu rose in importance to become potent prescriptions for the country's well-being. This ritual emphasis extended until the middle of the Heian period.

### TEXTUAL TRANSMISSION OF YAKUSHI BELIEF

The cult of a Buddhist deity relied primarily on the material manifestation of the deity through icons. But the sutras expounding the deity's magical powers were also crucial in disseminating information on how to properly worship the divinity. Sutras on the Medicine Buddha were transmitted to Japan during the second half of the seventh and first half of the eighth century.<sup>4</sup> These scriptures had a significant impact on the Buddhism of the Nara period, and changed the nature of worship. They contained vital information pertaining to the powers of this Buddha, the proper methods of making offerings to the deity, and the splendid benefits that were promised the devotee who called upon Bhaisajyaguru's aid.

Of the three main Buddhist scriptures on Yakushi worship, two Chinese translations were widely circulated in Japan. The earlier of these two texts was the *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing*, translated by Xuanzang (ca. 602–664) in 650. The second text, translated by Yijing (635–713) in 707, was the *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo benyuan gongde jing*.<sup>5</sup> Being a later translation, this text was not

known during Tenmu's reign, but was widely studied during the Nara period.

In light of Raoul Birnbaum's excellent study of each of these translations from Sanskrit to Chinese, here I will present only a brief outline of the two sutras, highlighting points that are important in considering later ritual practices using Yakushi icons.

### XUANZANG'S TRANSLATION FROM 650

*Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing* can be translated literally as the “Sutra on the Merits of the Fundamental Vows of the Master of Healing, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata” (J: *Yakushi rurikō nyorai hongan kudoku-kyō*; hereafter, *Yakushi Sutra*).<sup>6</sup> Xuanzang brought this sutra back to China from his travels in Central Asia.<sup>7</sup> Typically, all of the Yakushi sutras, regardless of the different translations, emphasize the conduct of ritual worship and the powers of the deity. The content of this sutra can be divided into four main sections:<sup>8</sup>

1. The twelve vows of Bhaisajyaguru. (A detailed description of his Lapis Lazuli Pure Land is included.)
2. An explanation of the merits of hearing, recollecting, and reciting the name Bhaisajyaguru, and the blessings that accompany these practices. (*Dhāraṇīs*, ritual incantations, are included.)
3. A description of how to conduct the ritual worship of Bhaisajyaguru.
4. A description of the Twelve Divine Generals (Jūni Shinshō), who are supporters of Bhaisajyaguru.

The first section of the sutra describes the wonderful Pure Land of Bhaisajyaguru and the vows he had made before he became a Buddha. As is typical of Buddhist scriptures, the sutra begins with the Buddha Śākyamuni (Shaka) arriving at the city of Vaiśālī and preaching to an assembly of people under a tree. Śākyamuni then proceeds to expound on the wonders of the Lapis Lazuli Pure Land, where Bhaisajyaguru resides. Like all Pure Lands

of Buddhas, this realm, located in the eastern direction, is a pure and splendidly decorated place. The sutra describes bedazzling jeweled trees and bathing pools ornamented with layers of gold, silver, and precious stones. It has been conjectured that the idea of the Lapis Lazuli Pure Land was inserted into the sutra to rival that of the more popular Western Pure Land of the Buddha Amitābha by proponents of the Medicine Buddha cult.<sup>9</sup>

All Buddhas make a number of specific vows to save sentient beings when they are still bodhisattvas on their spiritual paths towards enlightenment. Bhaiṣajyaguru himself made twelve such vows, which are stated in all of the Yakushi sutras:<sup>10</sup>

1. May a radiant light blaze forth from my body after enlightenment, brightening countless realms, and may all beings have perfect physical form, identical to my own.
2. May my body be like pure and radiant lapis lazuli, with a radiance more brilliant than the sun and moon, illuminating all who travel in darkness, enabling them to tread upon their paths.
3. By my limitless insight and means, may I enable all beings to obtain the necessities of life.
4. May all beings be shown the path of enlightenment, and may adherents to the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha paths become established in Mahāyāna practices.
5. May all beings be aided to follow the precepts of moral conduct. After hearing my name, those who have broken the precepts will be aided to regain their purity and prevented from sinking to a woesome path of existence.
6. May all who are deformed or handicapped in any way have their deformities removed upon hearing my name.
7. May all who are ill be cured upon hearing my name.
8. May women who, beset by woes, seek to become men be reborn as men in their next life.

9. May all who are caught in Māra's net, entangled in negative views, be caused to gain correct views and thus practice the Bodhisattva Way.
10. May all who are to be punished by the king be freed of their troubles.
11. May those who are desperately famished be given food. May they ultimately taste the sublime Teachings.
12. May all who are destitute of clothes obtain attractive garments and various adornments upon concentrating on my name.<sup>11</sup>

The second section of the Xuanzang sutra describes how a faithful devotee of Bhaiṣajyaguru can receive blessings if he or she hears or recites his name, “Oh Lord, Medicine Master, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Buddha.” Bhaiṣajyaguru has promised to come to the aid of all those who call out, reflect on, or recite his name.

In the third section, three special rituals associated with the worship of Bhaiṣajyaguru are explained. The first rite is recommended by the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī (Monju), the second by Śākyamuni, and the third by a bodhisattva by the name of “Saving Deliverance” (C: Jiutuo). For proper worship of Bhaiṣajyaguru, the devotee is urged to uphold the sutra by copying and paying reverence to it. The ritual instructions associated with the Bhaiṣajyaguru cult are quite specific:

Read and recite this *sūtra* forty-nine times. Light forty-nine lamps and make seven images of the form of that Tathāgata. In front of each image arrange seven lamps. Make each lamp as large as a cartwheel, and for forty-nine days let their shining light ceaselessly burn. Make a five-colored, variegated banner forty-nine hand-lengths in height.... Then the sick person will be able to obtain passage through this danger, and he will be removed from the grasp of evil demons.<sup>12</sup>

### **Yijing's Translation from 707**

Yijing's translation of the *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo ben-yuan gongde jing*, “Scripture on the Merits of the Fundamental Vows of the Seven Buddhas of Lapis

"Lazuli Radiance, the Masters of Medicine" (J: *Yakushi rurikō shichibutsu hongan kudoku-kyō*; hereafter, *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra*), was also hugely popular and widely circulated in the eighth century.<sup>13</sup> Basically the same in format as Xuanzang's translation, Yijing's version is longer and indicates an expansion of the former. Both versions expound the miraculous healing power of Yakushi; the fundamental difference between them is that the *Yakushi Sutra* highlights only Bhaisajyaguru, whereas the *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra* features Bhaisajyaguru plus six other Medicine Buddhas.<sup>14</sup>

Yijing's text consists of two fascicles. Fascicle One begins with a standard Mahāyāna introduction (in which Śākyamuni preaches to his assembly), followed by Bhaisajyaguru's six other Medicine Buddha manifestations, with details of each of their Pure Lands and their vows. All together, seven Medicine Buddhas are described in detail in the first section, with a total of forty-four vows made for the benefit of living beings. The seven Medicine Buddhas appear in the order shown below.<sup>15</sup>

The second fascicle closely follows Xuanzang's text; a description of the Master of Medicine, of Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata (Yakushi Rurikō Nyorai), his Pure Land, and his twelve vows are presented here. This section also introduces a series of *dhāraṇīs* (potent formulas of sacred syllables endowed with mystical power) expounded by Yakushi and his six other Buddha manifestations, as well as

by the bodhisattva Vajradhāra (Shūkongōshin). The number of *dhāraṇīs* introduced in this version is significantly higher than in the Xuanzang text.<sup>16</sup> The larger emphasis on *dhāraṇīs* in the Yijing text, according to Raoul Birnbaum, highlights the Esoteric or Tantric nature of the scripture.<sup>17</sup> As Ryūichi Abé has pointed out, however, the presence of *dhāraṇīs* in a text does not automatically make it Esoteric, as "*dhāraṇīs* can take place in an exclusively exoteric content."<sup>18</sup> In fact, many scholars of Buddhism assert that *dhāraṇīs* were part of mainstream Buddhist practices, and do not constitute evidence for proto-Tantrism.<sup>19</sup> More importantly, the reason for the popularity of Yijing's translation during the Nara period lies in the belief that the chanting of *dhāraṇīs* had the power to heal.<sup>20</sup>

Sutras were important not only because they contained theological and doctrinal information on specific deities, but also because the actual acts of expounding their teachings and chanting (reading) the texts were considered to be highly meritorious and efficacious for producing the results desired. The main sutras that the seventh-century imperial court decreed for recitation in the various temples in and around the capital were the *Sutra of Golden Light* (*Konkōmyō-kyō*) and the *Sutra of the Benevolent Kings* (*Ninnō-kyō*).

In 676, the court sent messengers to all of the provinces to expound both of these sutras. In 680, the *Sutra of Golden Light* was preached in the

Table 1 The seven Yakushi appearing in the *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra*

1. Zenmyō Kishō Nyorai	善名吉祥王如来	Good Name Auspicious King Tathāgata
2. Hōgetsu Chigen Kōon Jizaiō Nyorai	宝月智嚴光音自在王如来	Jeweled-Moon, Wisdom-Adorned, Radiating and Preaching Freely King Tathāgata
3. Konjiki Hōkō Myōgyō Jōju Nyorai	金色宝光妙行成就如来	Golden-Hued, Jewel-Light, Marvelous Conduct Perfected Tathāgata
4. Muyū Saishō Kissō Nyorai	無憂最勝吉祥如来	No-Grief Most Excellent and Auspicious Tathāgata
5. Hōkai Raion Nyorai	法海雷音如来	Dharma Sea of Thundering Sounds Tathāgata
6. Hōkai Shōshitsu Gishintsū Nyorai	法海勝瑟戲神通如来	Dharma Sea of Victorious Wisdom, Roaming Freely by Spiritual Powers Tathāgata
7. Yakushi Rurikō Nyorai	藥師瑠璃光如来	Master of Healing, of Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata

Palace and various Buddhist temples, and in 692 Empress Jitō (r. 686–697) commanded its recitation in the capital and four neighboring provinces on account of great floods.<sup>21</sup> As per this example, in the seventh century, the exposition of these sutras was often held after the occurrence of calamities on a national scale, such as drought or famine. In the eighth century, newly introduced scriptures such as the *Victorious Kings of the Golden Light Sutra* (*Konkōmyō Saishōō-kyō*; also known as *Saishōō-kyō*) were added for the purpose of national defense.<sup>22</sup>

Both the Xuanzang and Yijing versions of the Yakushi sutras were used more specifically for healing, and their perceived merits extended to healing on a national scale during Emperor Shōmu's reign (discussed later in this chapter). Both sutras also were used to quell evil spirits and all inauspicious things (as discussed in Chapter Two). A few extant written records specifically mention the *Yakushi Sutra* in the context of treating an ailing emperor or prominent court official. *Nihon shoki* (Chronicles of Japan; completed in 720) states that on 686.5.24, because Emperor Tenmu was ill, the *Yakushi Sutra* was expounded at Kawaradera and a “retreat” held within the Palace.<sup>23</sup> On this day, the Kawaradera monks probably followed the ritual prescribed in the text: “those that seek release from distress of illness should also read and recite this sutra.”<sup>24</sup> No reference to the *Yakushi Sutra* appears again in written records until 720, when Empress Genshō (r. 715–724) commanded that it be recited for one day and one night at forty-eight temples in the capital to pray for the recovery of Fujiwara no Fuhito (659–720), the Minister of the Right. The minister died the next day, and we do not hear about another exposition or recitation of the sutra until 744, during Emperor Shōmu's reign.<sup>25</sup>

The translations of the Yakushi sutras by Xuanzang and Yijing became major sources for informing concrete ritual practices. With the circulation of the texts among the monastic community, many more Yakushi icons would flood the new capital in Nara, making Yakushi worship a much more common practice in the eighth century.

## YAKUSHI WORSHIP FROM THE LATE SEVENTH CENTURY

The textual sources and a small number of extant icons all point to the last quarter of the seventh century for the early formation of Yakushi worship in Japan. Much of the evidence is traceable to the reigns of Emperor Tenmu and Empress Jitō. At that time, Yakushi was worshipped primarily to restore the well-being of individuals with prominent standing in society, and to memorialize them after their deaths.

Emperor Tenmu is well known for his endeavors to increase his sacral authority as a reigning sovereign through the worship of *kami*, indigenous ancestral or nature spirits.<sup>26</sup> His court and immediate successors also increasingly began to claim their authority over Buddhist institutions, especially in commanding the performance of Buddhist rites that would ensure the protection and prosperity of the realm. Tenmu and his chief consort, the later Empress Jitō, were involved in establishing large-scale Buddhist temples, including Takechi Ōdera.<sup>27</sup>

Tenmu relied on the overall powers of Buddhism to protect his realm, but for personal matters he turned particularly to the deity Yakushi. He depended on this Buddha to cure his physical ailments, and also those of his immediate family members. His vow to build Yakushiji (Temple of the Medicine Buddha) in 680 for his ill consort, Princess Uno (the future Empress Jitō), most clearly demonstrates his utmost faith in Yakushi's powers to heal the sick.<sup>28</sup> Donald McCallum has noted that, while most temples during this period were named in reference to specific geographic locales, Yakushiji was the first royal temple given a proper Buddhist name.<sup>29</sup> That this temple was consecrated to this specific Buddha confirms that Yakushi had gained a prominent status in the pantheon of Buddhist gods.

Tenmu also installed a monumental bronze Yakushi triad in Yamadadera. The famous Buddha Head from Kōfukuji (fig. 1) in Nara is all that remains of these magnificent sculptures. Originally, the triad consisted of Yakushi and two flanking



1 Head of Buddha. Late 7th century. Bronze. H. 97.3 cm.  
Kōfukuji (former East Golden Hall), Nara.

bodhisattvas, Nikkō (Sunlight) and Gakkō (Moonlight). The temple was initially commissioned by Soga Ishikawa Maro (d. 649), a prominent member of the court.<sup>30</sup> Construction began in the early 640s but was terminated after Ishikawa Maro was accused of treason and forced to commit suicide in 649. Despite these tragic circumstances, work resumed on the temple in 663, most likely due to the fact that Ishikawa Maro's three daughters were well situated at court in positions of power, and would have been able to patronize the project.<sup>31</sup> Notably, Tenmu's chief consort Uno was Ishikawa Maro's granddaughter; she may have actively participated in endorsing the rebuilding project in order to redeem her grandfather's honor.<sup>32</sup>

Although Ishikawa Maro commissioned Yamadadera, it was Emperor Tenmu who ordered the creation of a *jōroku* ("sixteen feet" in traditional Japanese measure) bronze Yakushi triad for the temple; this triad was completed in 685 to com-

memorate the courtier's death.<sup>33</sup> It is therefore not entirely certain whether Ishikawa Maro intended Yakushi to be the principal icon of the Lecture Hall in his temple. The choice of a Yakushi, I argue, reflected Tenmu's personal desire for and preoccupation with the deity. His confidence in Yakushi was already evident by his earlier commissioning of Yakushiji, and given that Tenmu died in 686, he was most likely quite ill at the time he commissioned the Yamadadera Yakushi triad.

Tenmu died before seeing Yakushiji to completion in the short-lived capital of Fujiwara (Fujiwarakyō).<sup>34</sup> The most important buildings at Yakushiji, namely the Golden Hall (Kondō) and the pagoda, were most likely completed by 688. On 688.1.8, a Buddhist ceremony known as the "great limitless meeting" (*musha dai-e*) was held at Yakushiji. As McCallum states, since memorial services for Tenmu were not performed at Yakushiji at the time of his death in 686, the *musha dai-e* held on 688.1.8 must have been performed for his sake.<sup>35</sup>

Princess Uno, who succeeded Tenmu as Empress Jitō, oversaw the continuing construction of Yakushiji, which came to be known as one of the Four Great Temples of Fujiwarakyō. Jitō's commitment to complete Yakushiji may have been inspired by her desire to carry out her late husband's wishes, as well as to memorialize the untimely death of their only son, Prince Kusakabe, in 689. The main icon of the Golden Hall was undoubtedly a Yakushi, given that the temple was named after the deity. Furthermore, the Yakushi icon would have already been enshrined in the Golden Hall by the time the *musha dai-e* was held in 688, as the hall would not have been truly complete without the presence of its principal icon of worship (*honzon*). It is therefore possible to make a reasonable assumption that this Yakushi icon was finished sometime between 681 and 688.<sup>36</sup> McCallum states that, given the large scale of Yakushiji's Golden Hall, its principal icon was most likely a Yakushi triad (Yakushi with two flanking bodhisattvas) of monumental *jōroku* size.<sup>37</sup>

Among extant seventh-century Yakushi statues, the famous image in the Hōryūji Golden Hall (fig. 2)



2 Seated Yakushi. Late 7th century. Gilt bronze. H. 63 cm. Kondō, Hōryūji, Nara.

must be addressed here.<sup>38</sup> The mandorla of this image bears an inscription with a dedication date of Suiko 15 (607). If this inscription is taken to be authentic, then this implies that Yakushi was already known and worshipped by members of the imperial court in the Asuka period (552–645). I find this highly unlikely, especially when all of the other icons we can positively identify as Yakushi are dated to the late seventh century.

In fact, the authenticity of the mandorla inscription has been debated vigorously among art historians for almost a century. This scholarly debate is too complicated and lengthy to be discussed here in its entirety. Briefly, the inscription states that when Emperor Yōmei (r. 585–587) fell ill in 586, he asked his sister, the future Empress Suiko (r. 593–628), and his son, Prince Shōtoku (574–622), to build a temple and dedicate a Yakushi statue for his recovery. The emperor died the following year, bringing the project to a halt. The inscription goes on to explain that Suiko and Shōtoku eventually completed this mission in 607.<sup>39</sup> The Yakushi image was enshrined as the principal icon at Ikarugadera, the temple built by Prince Shōtoku in Ikaruga.<sup>40</sup> If the inscription were authentic, it would mean that worship of Yakushi was known among members of the imperial clan in the early seventh century. Given that there are no textual sources recording Yakushi worship at that time, and that Buddhism was only first accepted in the 590s by members of the imperial family, it seems highly unlikely that a Yakushi image would be the principal icon of a relatively small clan temple such as Ikarugadera—especially as there is no evidence of Yakushi worship even among the Soga clan, the foremost patrons of Buddhism during the Asuka period.<sup>41</sup>

The general scholarly consensus today is that the current Hōryūji Yakushi statue was made as a replacement for an icon that was destroyed along with Ikarugadera in a 670 fire.<sup>42</sup> The temple was rebuilt in the late 680s and renamed Hōryūji. Accordingly, the extant Yakushi from Hōryūji was made in the late 680s, rather than 607. It was cast to resemble an icon created by Tori Busshi (or “Maker

of Buddhist Images” Tori), the principal sculptor of Buddhist icons for Soga no Umako (ca. 551–626). Tori’s extant works include the monumental seated bronze Shaka from Asukadera and the seated bronze Shaka triad also in Hōryūji’s Golden Hall.

Even if the current Yakushi icon was made after the reconstruction of Hōryūji, the question of the identity of the Ikarugadera icon, which was purportedly completed in 607, still remains. If Prince Shōtoku and Empress Suiko did indeed create a Buddhist icon upon Emperor Yōmei’s request, I believe it was most likely a Shaka or Miroku (S: Maitreya). In the Asuka period, Yakushi was not yet widely known. I suspect that Hōryūji’s choice of installing a Yakushi image in the 680s reflected the general popularity of Yakushi during Tenmu’s reign.

Another statue from the temple Hōrinji is one of the earliest extant seated Yakushi images (fig. 3). Hōrinji is located just northeast of Hōryūji, in the Ikaruga district of present-day Nara Prefecture. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to situate this Yakushi within a solid contextual framework, as the temple’s history is very murky, and little relevant evidence is available. Two stories explaining Hōrinji’s origins are recorded. The first states that one of Prince Shōtoku’s sons, Yamashiro no Ōe no Ō (d. 643), and his son, Prince Yuge, vowed to construct the temple in 622 to pray for Shōtoku, who was ill.<sup>43</sup> This story seems to follow the same rationale as that of the Yakushi in the Hōryūji Kondō, in that the temple adopted this particular founding history to bolster its prestige by association with Prince Shōtoku.

The other account, recorded in *Shōtoku taishi denryaku* (Biography of Crown Prince Shōtoku; 917), states that three men—a Buddhist priest from the Korean kingdom of Paekche by the name of Kai Hōshi (also referred to as Bun Hōshi); a Japanese priest, Enmei Hōshi; and another Japanese man known as Shitahino-niimono (or Shimohino-kimikusamono)—together commissioned the temple shortly after the burning of Ikarugadera in 670.<sup>44</sup> According to Machida Kōichi, however, both accounts are rife with problems and inaccuracies,



3 *Seated Yakushi*. Late 7th century.  
Wood, single-block construction;  
originally polychromed. H.  
110.6 cm. Hōrinji, Nara.

and neither enlightens us about the actual patrons who may have commissioned the Yakushi statue for the temple.

The principal icon of worship at Hōrinji is a wooden, seated Yakushi statue that displays stylistic features of the second half of the seventh century. At first glance, the Hōrinji image exhibits characteristics of the Asuka-period statues made in the workshop of Tori Busshi. The “Tori Busshi” style exhibits a head that is proportionally large for the torso, almond-shaped eyes, a broad nose with a strong bridge, and a subtle “archaic” smile on the

lips. As for the monastic robe, the drapery hangs over the edge of the platform in a strongly stylized, flattened pattern. While these are all characteristics of icons made in the Tori workshop, art historians such as Tanabe Saburōsuke have pointed out other features of the Hōrinji Yakushi that exhibit traits from the Hakuhō period (645–710).<sup>45</sup>

The most obvious of the Hakuhō stylistic traits can be found in the Hōrinji Yakushi’s eyes. In comparison to the almond-shaped “single-lidded” eyes of the Hōryūji Golden Hall Shaka icon, the eyes of this Yakushi are double-lidded. They also do not

possess the typical almond shape, in which the top contours of the eyes form a mild arc; instead, the contours of the Hōrinji Yakushi's eyes describe slightly undulating curves. This particular eye shape is commonly found on small gilt-bronze icons of the Hakuhō period. Other Hakuhō stylistic traits include the way in which the outer robe (*daie*) rests lightly on the right shoulder and the right collar of the inner robe, falling straight down to mid-waist, rather than crossing over to the left arm.<sup>46</sup>

Due to Hōrinji's modest scale and the fact that the Yakushi statue, the temple's principal icon, is made from wood rather than bronze, the Hōrinji Yakushi was most likely commissioned by a prominent non-imperial clan residing in the Ikarugadera area. The dating of the image to the second half of the seventh century conforms to the rise of Yakushi worship in Fujiwarakyō. The Hōrinji Yakushi, located outside Fujiwarakyō, is one example revealing that Yakushi worship had spread beyond the domain of imperial commissions in the capital to private clans in neighboring regions as well.

The Hōrinji Yakushi statue, along with the Yamadadera and Hōryūji icons, is one of the rare remnants of seventh-century Yakushi worship. These icons hint at the story of the earliest forms of such worship in Japan. Through their configuration, the images attest to the early belief in Yakushi held by the Japanese of the time. The transmission of sacred texts elucidating the merits and powers of Yakushi in the second half of the seventh century was also a salient factor in promoting the cult.

#### THE FORMATION OF A STATE-CENTERED YAKUSHI CULT IN NARA

During the eighth century, foreign ideas and materials continued to flow into Japan directly from the continent, resulting in a flourish of political and religious innovations in the new capital at Nara, established in 710. Japanese monks sent to Tang China on imperial missions returned with the latest

Buddhist doctrines, texts, and images. Buddhist icon production also followed continental trends, including new techniques (such as hollow-core dry lacquer) and styles. The Chinese-trained monks also introduced Tantric deities, which fascinated with their strange, exotic features.<sup>47</sup> All of these new Buddhist ideas found artistic expression through the increased construction of temples, with exquisite icons filling their image halls. Even as other new Buddhist divinities populated the Nara temples, Yakushi's popularity did not wane. On the contrary, his status as a healing deity gained greater prominence among the Nara aristocracy, and subsequently an all-encompassing healing cult arose, designed to benefit the whole nation. The sphere of Yakushi's healing powers expanded exponentially to include the entire country, rather than to benefit only one individual. In this section, I explore how a systematic set of discursive and ritual practices centered on Yakushi images became firmly established in the eighth century. I examine Yakushiji and Shin Yakushiji here as examples of court patronage and belief in the deity's healing powers. In addition, I discuss the practice of Buddhist repentance rites (Yakushi *keka*) in relation to Yakushi's role as protector of the state.

#### **Yakushiji Yakushi Triad**

Many Yakushi images were created in prominent temples in Nara as icons to which monks would direct sutra readings and devotional rites. The major monasteries enjoyed court patronage, and the extant bronze Yakushi triad from Yakushiji in present-day Nara city (figs. 4, 5, 6) exemplifies the full-scale support received from the central government during the early Nara period. Although there is little written documentation providing details of Yakushiji's establishment, the principal icons of worship at the temple display exceptional craftsmanship and sophisticated iconography. These features demonstrate the further development of the Yakushi devotional cult in the new capital.

For scholars, the dating of this Yakushi triad has also been a subject of great contention, an issue that can only be addressed briefly here.



4 Seated Yakushi. Late 7th–early 8th century. Bronze. H. 254.7 cm. Kondō, Yakushiji, Nara.

MEDICINE MASTER BUDDHA



5 *Nikkō bosatsu*. Late 7th–early 8th century. Bronze. H. 317.3 cm. Kondō, Yakushiji, Nara.



6 *Gakkō bosatsu*. Late 7th–early 8th century. Bronze. H. 315.3 cm. Kondō, Yakushiji, Nara.

As mentioned above, Emperor Tenmu vowed to establish Yakushiji to pray for the recovery of his consort's health, and although he died before witnessing its completion, Yakushiji was a functioning temple in 688, with at least the Golden Hall and its main icon installed.<sup>48</sup> According to *Shoku Nihongi* (Chronicle of Japan, Continued, a continuation of *Nihon shoki*; 797), by 698, Yakushiji was largely complete.<sup>49</sup> When the capital at Nara was established in 710, Empress Genmei (r. 707–715) ordered the “transfer” of Yakushiji from Fujiwarakyō to Nara. For this reason, a debate has long stood on whether the extant Yakushiji Yakushi triad was originally made for Fujiwarakyō Yakushiji (dating the statues to the late seventh century) or for Nara Yakushiji (dating them after 710). Scholars are generally split into the two opposing groups.<sup>50</sup> Those who have advocated the latter theory speculate that the extant bronze Yakushi triad was completed for Nara Yakushiji sometime during the Yōrō era (717–724), which is also the position taken in this volume.<sup>51</sup>

The seated Yakushi is flanked by two standing bodhisattva attendants (figs. 5, 6). The Yakushi sutras explain that these two attendants are Nikkō and Gakkō, but do not discuss their appearance. The texts only note that they are the “Great Bodhisattvas” (S: *bodhisattva-mahāsattvas*), the “leaders of the limitless, numberless host of bodhisattvas” in the Lapis Lazuli Pure Land, upholding the teachings of their Lord, Yakushi. The central Buddha is a monumental *jōroku* seated image, over 2.5 meters tall. Nikkō and Gakkō, both standing over 3 meters, tower over the worshipper, and the three icons instill a sense of awe in any devotee who stands before them.

The complete rendering of the Thirty-two Major Marks (*sanjūni sō*) found on the central Yakushi shows the extensive degree of care that went into the making of this icon. The Thirty-two Major Marks of the Buddha are listed in several Mahāyāna texts, which explain that there were thirty-two physical attributes on the Buddha's body that denoted his transcendent qualities.<sup>52</sup> All Buddhist icons display, to some extent, some of

the Thirty-two Marks, the most common of these being the light that emanates from the Buddha's body (represented by the mandorla or halo), the *uṣṇīṣa* (*nikkei*; the cranial bump on the Buddha's head that symbolizes his great wisdom), the snail-shell curls of his hair, and the *ūrṇā* (*byakugō*; the tuft of white hair on the forehead between the eyes). All of these features are clearly evident on the Yakushiji Yakushi, as well as other physical features that are less commonly depicted. For example, the sculptors paid special attention to rendering the Buddha's webbed fingers, another of the Thirty-two Marks. In addition to the extensive major markings, this Yakushi also displays the Cakravartin's Seven Jewels (J: *shippō*; S: *sapta-ratna*) on his body. The Wheel of the Law (S: *dharma-cakra*), which represents the teachings of the Buddha, is incised on his left palm. On the sole of his left foot, a large thousand-spoked *dharma-cakra* is also incised in the center, with the Three Jewels (S: *triratna*) below it. The remainder of the Cakravartin's Seven Jewels are also incised on his left sole: a crown, symbolizing the Buddha's supremacy; a conch shell, implying the preaching of the Buddha's teachings to an assembly; a vase, symbolizing his supreme intelligence; paired fish, denoting freedom from restraints; and flames, representing his numinosity.<sup>53</sup>

The Yakushiji Yakushi also exhibits unusual symbolic hand gestures (S: *mudrā*) that are noteworthy as well. Yakushi's right hand, at first glance, seems to form the *abhaya mudrā* (*semui-in*), a “fear not” gesture of reassurance. This hand gesture is often found on Yakushi images from all periods, but here the rendering is slightly atypical, with the index finger gently touching the thumb to form a circle (rather than having all five fingers straight and pointed upwards). According to E. Dale Saunders, this *mudrā* is a variant, a kind of preaching gesture known as the *an-i-in* (S: *vitarka mudrā*).<sup>54</sup> Only a handful of examples of eighth-century Yakushi images forming the *an-i-in* gesture with the right hand are known, including the bronze seated Yakushi from Shōryakuji, Nara (fig. 7).



7 *Seated Yakushi*. 8th century. Bronze. H. 28 cm.  
Shōryakuji, Nara.

As for the *mudrā* formed by Yakushi's left hand, this arm is lowered with the hand resting on the leg, and the fingers are curled, as if the palm once held an object. The common misunderstanding that this Yakushi once held a medicine jar, subsequently lost, has thus arisen. In fact, Yakushi images from the Nara period and earlier typically do not hold medicine jars, and the right hand often forms the preaching rather than the *abhaya mudrā*. The *mudrā* formed by the Yakushiji Yakushi's left hand, with palm facing up and middle finger raised, is a variant of the gift-giving gesture (J: *segan-in*; S: *varada mudrā*).<sup>55</sup>

The common *mudrā* combination found on Yakushi images from both the late seventh and eighth centuries is the right hand in *abhaya mudrā* and the left in *varada mudrā*, as seen in the aforementioned Yakushi images from the Hōryūji Golden Hall and Hōrinji. In the case of the Hōryūji Kondō Yakushi, the left hand is pendent with the palm facing the viewer, the middle and index fingers extended downward. The Hōrinji Yakushi, however, does not expose his left palm to the viewer; instead, the palm faces up, with the fingers bent slightly as if to support a round object.<sup>56</sup> Both types of hand gestures are considered to be the *varada mudrā*, which denotes the granting of wishes in fulfillment of the Buddha's vow. The *abhaya-varada mudrā* combination is frequently found on seventh- and eighth-century Shaka, Birushana, and Yakushi images. Thus, Yakushi images from this period are hard to distinguish from Shaka figures, unless accompanied by an inscription or other means of identification.

The rectangular pedestal on which each of these Yakushi images sits, known in Japan as the "Mt. Sumeru" pedestal type (*shumidan*), symbolizes the *axis mundi* of Buddhist cosmology—the cosmic mountain, Mt. Sumeru.<sup>57</sup> It also represents the great earth over which Yakushi presides. The four sides of the Mt. Sumeru pedestal of the Yakushiji Yakushi display an unusual iconography not found on the pedestal of any other Japanese Buddhist image. On each of the four sides a bas-relief representation of one of the four directional deities (J: *shishin*; C: *si shou*)—the blue-green dragon of the East, the white tiger of the West, the red bird of the South, and the "Dark Warrior" of the North (*genbu*; a serpent wrapped around a tortoise)—can be found. This representational scheme is a much older, pre-Buddhist, Chinese motif with Daoist undertones, often found illustrated inside East Asian tombs because of the auspiciousness of these deities that protect the four cardinal directions. In Japan, examples of the four directional animals are found on the interior walls of the Takamatsuzuka and Kitora Tombs in Nara (late seventh–early eighth century). According to Kaneko Hiroaki, the

Yakushiji Yakushi's Mt. Sumeru pedestal represents the earth sanctified and protected by the four directional deities.<sup>58</sup>

A detailed examination of the flanking bodhisattvas, Nikkō and Gakkō, reveals the superior bronze-casting craftsmanship exhibited by the triad. Like the central Yakushi, Nikkō and Gakkō appear very fleshy and sensual, conceived fully in the round. The two are almost identical. Nikkō stands to Yakushi's left (the viewer's right), and Gakkō stands to his right. The excellent craftsmanship can also be seen in the fully modeled backs of the bodhisattvas. Normally, each divinity has a large mandorla placed behind him, so his back is not meant to be seen. Despite their non-visibility, the backs of the bodhisattvas have been sensually sculpted in great detail and precision, with the spines gently curving in a realistic manner. Naturalism is further achieved by the string of beads that crosses over one shoulder and down to the hip, the thin scarf that lightly covers and folds over both shoulders, and the elegant, rippling folds of the skirt, all of which are contrasted against the soft, smooth flesh. The fact that the texture of each material—cloth, flesh, beads—is rendered so effectively in one medium (bronze) attests to the fact that the Yakushi triad was made by the best metal-workers in the capital.

The superior craftsmanship and attention to iconographical and stylistic details poured into the creation of the Yakushiji Yakushi triad undoubtedly highlighted the potent, awe-inspiring healing powers contained in the icons for eighth-century viewers. This growing attention to Yakushi foreshadows the imminent merging of private healing practices with the larger goal of prosperity and well-being for Japan as a whole by the end of the century.

### THE RISE OF YAKUSHI REPENTANCE RITUALS

From the eighth century onward, the Buddhist rite of repentance (*keka*) became a major cultic

practice that popularized Yakushi worship, inspiring the production of many Yakushi icons. This rite embodied the idea of monks confessing transgressions from their past and present lives to the Buddha in order to purify and eliminate karmic obstructions.<sup>59</sup> In China and Japan, icons of Buddhist deities such as Amida, Shaka, Yakushi, Kannon (S: Avalokiteśvara), and Kichijōten (S: Śrī-mahādevī or Mahāśrī) became the locus of *keka* rites.<sup>60</sup> Such rites also became synonymous with Buddhist ceremonies (*hō-e*) in general, in that the main objective was to secure practical benefits, such as abundant rain or the restoration of health.<sup>61</sup> Although *keka* in the original Indian context was a personal ritual held by monks and nuns in the monastic community for the purpose of confessing and eliminating karmic hindrances, in China and Japan it became a widely practiced rite for securing practical benefits through the elimination of bad karma.<sup>62</sup> By the latter half of the eighth century, *keka* rites in Japan were frequently performed for the collective well-being and prosperity of all people.<sup>63</sup>

Traditionally, it was a special kind of Buddhist practitioner, usually a mountain ascetic (*gyōja* or *jōgyō-sō*), who performed *keka* rites.<sup>64</sup> By reciting sutras and making offerings, these specialized practitioners confessed their wrongdoings in front of the deity (as embodied by an image), eliminating evil karma and soliciting the removal of any obstacles created by such karma in order to procure the desired benefits. According to Ryūichi Abé, "It is this collective cleansing of karmic defilement that was believed to achieve various auspicious outcomes, such as healing illness, ending drought, preventing epidemics, and suppressing rebellions."<sup>65</sup>

The administrative and penal codes of the Nara period placed the state's welfare on the shoulders of the sovereign, who was therefore personally responsible for the plight of the country. For example, after the nation was struck by a smallpox epidemic followed by famine, Emperor Shōmu accepted the blame by stating, "Recently, untoward events have occurred one after another. Bad

omens are still to be seen. I fear the responsibility is all mine.”<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, the “heavenly sovereign’s body” was conceived as the “body of the state” (*kokutai*), encompassing the idea that the realm would remain peaceful and orderly as long as the sovereign’s health was maintained.<sup>67</sup> This idea is apparent in a *Shoku Nihongi* entry for 749.<sup>68</sup> Shōmu’s ill health, thought to have resulted from his lack of virtue, was also thought to be causing the heavens to respond with disfavor. Thus, natural calamities that affected the country were perceived to have arisen from the sovereign’s lack of merit.<sup>69</sup>

The great smallpox epidemic of 735–737 had a devastating effect on Japan. The emperor felt personally responsible; this may have impelled him to seek out a variety of major Buddhist projects. Although educated as a Confucian ruler, Emperor Shōmu increasingly came to devote himself to Buddhism during his reign. He became partial to *keka*, and ordered many of these rites to be performed.<sup>70</sup> In 739 a *keka* was conducted for seven days and seven nights, and then combined with the recitation (*tendoku*) of the *Sutra for the Ripening of Five Grains* to pray for abundant crops.<sup>71</sup> Marinus Willem de Visser observes that while Shōmu began ordering *keka* for the purpose of protecting the country against calamities, no *keka* dedicated to Yakushi was performed in 739, just after the smallpox epidemic.<sup>72</sup> This indicates that Yakushi worship and Yakushi *keka* were not yet considered effective remedies for disasters on a national scale. But beginning in 744 (and continuing through the 840s), Yakushi’s role and the nature of rituals pertaining to the deity shifted to encompass the welfare of the nation. The first record of a Yakushi *keka* appears in *Shoku Nihongi* in an entry for 744.12.4. On this date, Shōmu ordered the rite to be performed for seven consecutive days throughout the provinces in order to prevent the spread of an epidemic.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, from this time, Yakushi *keka* also came to be held at specially designated places known as Yakushi Keka Halls (*Yakushi keka-sho*), ceremonial spaces other than royal palaces and temples in the capital.<sup>74</sup>

One ritual that was often performed in tandem with *keka* in response to national calamities was the rite of “pardoning of crimes and granting amnesty” (*taisha*). Based on the belief that a sovereign could gain additional merit through such altruistic acts, *taisha* also showed off the ruler’s benevolence and political acumen. Shōmu’s daughter, Empress Kōken (r. 749–758; also r. 764–770 as Empress Shōtoku), frequently granted amnesty to criminals. Kōken particularly favored the Medicine Buddha over other Buddhist deities. On 750.1.1, shortly after Shōmu took the tonsure, Kōken issued a proclamation stating that she “took refuge” (in the Buddhist sense) in the *Yakushi Sutra*. Wishing to purify the population, she pardoned criminals throughout the country.<sup>75</sup>

During the Nara period, *taisha* became an associated component of *keka*. The Yakushi scriptures mandate such an idea. As one section of the *Yakushi Sutra* states, “... there should arise in that properly enthroned *kṣatriya* king the thought of compassion and pity towards all sentient things. He should pardon all who are incarcerated.”<sup>76</sup> Likewise, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra* says, “With great mercy, [the Yakushi devotee] should pardon and release from their gloomy difficulties all those distressed beings [in his prisons].”<sup>77</sup>

Another ritual often held in conjunction with *keka* was the rite of *hōjō*, “the release of living beings.”<sup>78</sup> In this practice, widespread in Chinese and Japanese Buddhism, fish and small birds are released into the wild to show one’s compassion for fellow sentient beings. Like *taisha*, *hōjō* was often conducted in combination with Yakushi *keka*. The practice may be found in the *Shoku Nihongi* entry for 745.9.19, which notes,

Various monasteries in the capital and purified sites at celebrated mountains were ordered to perform *Yakushi keka*. Shrine offerings and prayers were made to the shrines of Kamo, Matsuo, and others of the same rank. The government ordered the release of falcons and cormorants in all of the provinces, and permitted about thirty-eight hundred people to enter the Buddhist priesthood.<sup>79</sup>

The compassionate act of liberating living things is based upon one of the commandments found in the *Brahma's Net Sutra* (S: *Brahmajāla-sūtra*; J: *Bonmō-kyō*), which states,

Out of his compassion a disciple of the Buddha must set free living creatures. Since all male creatures have at one time been one's father, they should all be regarded as one's father. And since all female creatures have at one time been one's mother, they should be regarded as one's mother. In each life they have been those who have given birth to one. All sentient beings throughout the six realms can therefore be considered one's father and mother. Thus to catch and eat any living creatures is surely equivalent to killing one's own parents and eating one's old body because the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and air have been the original components of one's own body. For these reasons, one should always practice setting free all living creatures.<sup>80</sup>

The act of releasing living beings is prescribed in both Xuanzang's and Yijing's sutras: "You should release forty-nine living creatures of varied species." The sutras further explain that by observing this ritual, "the winds and rains will occur at their proper seasons, and the crops will ripen. All sentient beings will be healthy and will be gladdened and joyous."<sup>81</sup> The liberation of both humans and animals emphasized the compassionate nature of the sovereign; along with acts of penitence, these rites greatly increased his spiritual merit, and by extension, ensured the prosperity of the realm.

The practice of Yakushi *keka* embodied the emerging belief that, by promoting the health of the emperor, Yakushi would ensure, by extension, the longevity of the country. Yakushi *keka*, often combined with the rites of *taisha* and *hōjō* to ensure efficacy, became a central feature of Yakushi worship in the eighth century. The performance of these rituals gained prominence during the reign of Shōmu and his consort, Kōmyō. Their growing concern for the prosperity of the whole nation led to other large-scale projects that focused on Yakushi.

## THE FOUNDING OF SHIN YAKUSHIJI

While Emperor Shōmu is most famous today for his aforementioned sixteen-meter bronze Great Buddha at Tōdaiji, and for establishing a system of national monasteries and nunneries in all of the provinces, his wife Kōmyō was equally ambitious with her Buddhist projects. Kōmyō's fervent devotion to the Medicine Buddha and Yakushi *keka* is evident in her construction of Shin Yakushiji ("New" Yakushiji) in Nara. Turning her prayers toward the Medicine Buddha, Kōmyō officially established Shin Yakushiji in 747 for the purpose of restoring her husband's declining health. The grand scale of the temple, as well as the elaborate set of seven Yakushi icons made for its Golden Hall, is most telling of the imperial couple's faith in this deity.

Shin Yakushiji's grandeur has largely been lost, as the original temple and its main icons of worship were destroyed long ago. The current temple complex is rather modest, consisting of a main worship hall (Hondō), the only extant wooden structure from the Nara period at the temple, a bell tower, and a Jizō Hall, both from the Kamakura period. Among art historians, Shin Yakushiji is known for its striking early-Heian plain-wood sculpture of Yakushi and the impressive Nara-period clay statues of the Twelve Divine Generals (Jūni Shinshō), rather than for its formal splendor or its ties to Kōmyō and Shōmu.<sup>82</sup> These impressive statues, however, were not the temple's original icons.

As with many temple icons, the details of the origins of the images at Shin Yakushiji (as well as the history of the temple itself) during the late eighth century are marked largely by uncertainty and obscurity; nevertheless, scholars have documented that Kōmyō commissioned seven Yakushi statues for the temple's original Golden Hall. The following passage from *Tōdaiji yōroku* (Essential Records of Tōdaiji; early twelfth century) describes the founding of Shin Yakushiji: "In the third month of Tenpyō 19 [747], because the emperor [Shōmu] was indisposed, his royal

consort Ninshō [Kōmyō] built Shin Yakushiji, and had images of the ‘Seven Medicine Buddhas’ made.”<sup>83</sup>

Until very recently, the only definitive information we had on Shin Yakushiji’s Golden Hall (from *Tōdaiji yōroku*) was that it was a nine-bay structure.<sup>84</sup> In addition, the temple had two pagodas, a bell tower, and monks’ living quarters that housed about one hundred priests. Shin Yakushiji’s nine-bay Golden Hall can be further confirmed by a drawing known as *Tōdaiji sankai shishizu* (Map of Tōdaiji’s Mountainous Borders), dated 756.6.9 (Tenpyō Shōhō 8). In this drawing, a seven-bay structure marked as “Shin Yakushijidō” is illustrated at lower right. How do we account for the discrepancy between the seven-bay hall in this illustration and the account of a nine-bay hall in *Tōdaiji yōroku*? Adachi Kō has provided a convincing explanation: it was intentional. He notes that the other illustrations of main worship halls in the drawing—Tōdaiji’s Great Buddha Hall (an eleven-bay structure), the Kenzakudō (a five-bay structure), and the Senjudō (a seven-bay structure, now known as the Nigatsudō)—are all depicted as three-bay buildings.<sup>85</sup> The fact that all of these multi-bayed image halls were reduced to three bays, with the exception of Shin Yakushiji’s Golden Hall, emphasized the atypical feature of the latter—namely, the set of seven Yakushi statues commissioned by Kōmyō. Adachi thus believes that the depiction of the Golden Hall as a seven-bay structure was meant to underscore the fact that this hall enshrined *seven* main icons of worship, rather than the norm of one.<sup>86</sup>

Kōmyō may have conceived the idea of constructing Shin Yakushiji and enshrining seven Yakushi icons by witnessing Shōmu’s own preoccupation with Yakushi two years earlier. According to the *Shoku Nihongi* entry for 745.9.19, an ill Shōmu ordered Yakushi *keka* rituals to be held at various temples and purified sites on famous mountains.<sup>87</sup> The next day’s entry further states that an order was issued to make seven statues of the Buddha Yakushi, each six *shaku*, three *sun* (approximately

1.95 meters) in height, and to copy seven fascicles of the *Yakushi Sutra*.<sup>88</sup> It should be emphasized that these images were envisioned as seated *han jōroku* (half-*jōroku*) statues, as they each measured almost two meters in height.<sup>89</sup> It is not clear from the *Shoku Nihongi* entry whether or not the seven Yakushi statues were actually made, and where they may have been enshrined. Shimizu Masumi proposes that these seven images were those eventually enshrined at Shin Yakushiji.<sup>90</sup> Although this theory cannot be verified, Shōmu’s command to have seven monumental Yakushi statues made certainly must have provided the impetus for the founding of Shin Yakushiji.

In November 2008, one of the most important and exciting recent archaeological excavations in Japan revealed the foundation of the original Shin Yakushiji Golden Hall.<sup>91</sup> Based on the foundation’s size, the Golden Hall is estimated to have been a thirteen-bay building with an east-west façade of fifty-nine meters. The foundation itself was determined to be sixty-eight meters long and twenty-eight meters wide. This was an incredibly large Golden Hall, and aside from Tōdaiji’s Great Buddha Hall, no other Kondō in Nara was built to such proportions. Yakushiji’s Golden Hall, as a point of comparison, measured approximately thirty by eighteen meters, not even half the size of Shin Yakushiji’s. Such an enormous structure would have been necessary for enshrining seven monumental Yakushi icons. Shōmu and his consort clearly spared no cost in establishing Buddhist temples and commissioning icons. In light of Shōmu’s commissioning of the Great Buddha of Tōdaiji, Shin Yakushiji’s Golden Hall and its seven icons come as no surprise. This is also the only documented example from the Nara period of seven Yakushi statues being made as a set for a single worship hall, a practice that would not come into vogue again until the latter half of the Heian period.

Kōmyō sponsored a full iconographical program featuring the seven monumental Yakushi icons and including the bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō, and the Twelve Divine Generals. None of

the existing written sources record the actual medium used for the Yakushi icons, but as bronze, hollow-core dry lacquer, and clay were the three major materials employed for images for state-sponsored temples during the eighth century, the Yakushi statues were likely made from one of these three. Bronze—the most costly, time-consuming, and prestigious of these materials—would have been a natural choice, especially as Yakushiji's *honzon* was constructed of gilt bronze (fig. 4). It was also a medium favored by Shōmu. In 747, however, the production of Shin Yakushiji's main icons was proceeding in tandem with the casting of the bronze for Tōdaiji's Great Buddha.<sup>92</sup> Given that this colossal bronze Buddha was Shōmu's major project (and was steadily depleting the nation's financial resources), it is unlikely that any additional bronze was made available for other large-scale commissions.

Clay also could have been used. As Nishikawa Shinji notes, according to *Shōsōin monjo* (a collection of Nara-period documents kept in the Shōsōin imperial repository at Tōdaiji), the Nikkō and Gakkō images were made of clay. Nishikawa therefore speculates that the Twelve Divine Generals were also formed from clay.<sup>93</sup> But clay is a brittle material, prone to breakage. Nishikawa thus surmises that hollow-core dry lacquer, a more difficult and sophisticated medium, was therefore a more likely choice for the seven main icons of worship.

While production methods for clay and bronze statuary had been well established since the seventh century, the technique for constructing hollow-core dry-lacquer images was introduced in the early eighth century. Therefore, from the standpoint of innovation and novelty, hollow-core dry lacquer would have been a feasible option for Kōmyō and her relatives from the powerful Fujiwara clan, who were known to adopt the latest trends from China.<sup>94</sup> In fact, Kōfukuji, the Fujiwara family temple, had its own lacquer workshop. Kōmyō had sponsored a large group of dry-lacquer images for Kōfukuji's West Golden Hall in memory of her mother. Lacquer statuary

was also made at the Tōdaiji workshop, and Kōmyō is credited for supporting the construction of the colossal dry-lacquer statue of Fukūkenzaku Kannon (S: Amoghapāśa) and its accompanying images in Tōdaiji's Sangatsudō.<sup>95</sup>

A fascinating report on new archaeological findings, announced in early 2010, has strengthened the likelihood that the seven Yakushi images were all made of hollow-core dry lacquer. Excavators at the Shin Yakushiji Kondō site found five small fragments of dry lacquer, ranging from one to four centimeters in length. Based on the patterning on these fragments, scholars determined that they had once comprised part of the drapery folds of Buddhist images, and believe that they came from the seven Yakushi statues. Furthermore, these fragments were found about fifty meters south of the area thought to have been the location of the front steps of the Golden Hall, and while dry-lacquer pieces had been unearthed previously at this site, this was the first time that fragments clearly belonging to Buddhist statues were discovered. Yamagishi Kōki notes that these newly discovered pieces now have determined that dry-lacquer images were made for the Golden Hall, in addition to the clay statues mentioned in *Shōsōin monjo*.<sup>96</sup>

Unfortunately, in 962 (Ōwa 2) a typhoon destroyed the Shin Yakushiji Golden Hall.<sup>97</sup> Although the written sources do not mention the damage caused inside the structure, given that the statues were most likely made of clay or dry lacquer, it may be presumed that they were all destroyed. The Golden Hall was never reconstructed to its original scale and grandeur, and the present main hall stands east of the Golden Hall's former location.

Other than the seven Yakushi images ordered by Emperor Shōmu in 745, and the seven that his consort commissioned for Shin Yakushiji in 747, no other plans to create a set of seven Medicine Buddha statues appear in extant records from the Nara period. But from the late eighth century onward, we do find textual sources and extant statues giving evidence that, as an homage to Yakushi, a mandorla

depicting seven Yakushi figures was adopted in lieu of seven independent Yakushi icons.<sup>98</sup> While the sutras stipulate the making of icons as a form of devotion, they do not stipulate the size of the images produced. Thus, practical considerations likely guided the emergence of this more economical iconographical feature.

These grand-scale projects dedicated to Yakushi not only confirmed the deity's high status within the Buddhist practices of the Nara aristocracy, but also demonstrated how Shōmu relied upon Yakushi for the welfare of his entire imperium.

This chapter has explored the early context and origins of the cult of Yakushi, which developed fully during the Nara period. Yakushi worship in the seventh and eighth centuries was confined to the capital and its immediate environs. At this point in time, worship of the deity was directed

primarily for the benefit of the ruling sovereign and prominent members of the court, fulfilling a symbolic and therapeutic imperative for the ruling elite. In the early stages of the cult, Yakushi was called upon to heal individuals or to memorialize a person's death. It was not until the Nara period that Yakushi images were produced to function in rituals conducted not only for an individual's well-being, but also for the welfare of the entire country. Yakushi icons produced in the capital were usually monumental in size, or made with expensive materials using the most advanced techniques available at the time, reflecting the tastes of their wealthy and powerful lay patrons. It was not until the Heian period that Yakushi worship was disseminated to peripheral areas of Japan, transforming the religious, artistic, and cultural makeup of the country.



# The Magical Yakushi: Spirit Pacifier and Healer-God

**I**N 784, EMPEROR KANMU (r. 781–806) moved his court from Nara to Nagaoka. This new capital was short lived, lasting less than a decade before the decision was made to transfer the capital yet again to the northeast, to what is now present-day Kyoto. Work began at the site in 793 and the new capital, called Heiankyō (Capital of Peace and Tranquility), became officially established with Kanmu's move to his new palace the following year. One reason for Kanmu's decision to leave Nara was to strengthen his court by ensuring that the great Nara monasteries did not interfere in the political affairs of the state, as they had done repeatedly in the past. As part of this strategy to keep the powerful Buddhist institutions at bay, Kanmu did not permit the Nara monasteries to transfer to the new capital, and instead authorized only two Buddhist temples to be built in the city. These state-sponsored temples, Tōji (Eastern Temple) and Saiji (Western Temple), were built on the east and west sides of the great Suzaku gate (the entrance to the city) to protect the imperial palace and the new capital from malevolent spiritual forces.

Although Emperor Kanmu wanted to restrain the influence of the Nara Buddhist institutions, he was also interested in new forms of Buddhism and other innovations from China. In 804, he sent two talented Buddhist monks, Saichō (767–822) and Kūkai (774–835), on an official mission to study those forms of Buddhism in Tang China. When the

monks returned, they each established a new school of Buddhism that they had learned on the continent. Saichō established the Tendai (C: Tiantai) school, which emphasized the supremacy of the *Lotus Sutra* (S: *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra*; J: *Hokekyō*), and Kūkai founded the Shingon (C: Zhenyan) school. These two schools introduced a pantheon of new Buddhist deities, texts, and ritual practices. The Heian court was particularly interested in these new forms of Buddhism as expedient means for protecting the state. Outside the capital, monastic centers on sacred mountains thrived, including those established by Kūkai and Saichō on Mt. Kōya and Mt. Hiei, respectively, as well as others across the country. Thus, the dawn of the Heian period was marked by this importation of new Chinese forms of Buddhism.

In this chapter I illuminate the burgeoning cult of Yakushi in the Heian period and the role of its icons. To do this, I explore the various elements that promoted the cult and its images in all areas of Japan during this period, both in the capital and in remote provinces. Specifically, I consider how numerous factors involved in Yakushi worship—ritual, institutional, and technical—were well suited to the needs of a broader range of people, thereby contributing to the flowering of the cult well beyond the Heian court. The first section of the chapter discusses the state's increasing reliance on the Buddha Yakushi for *keka* rites, especially during the reign of Emperor Ninmyō (r. 833–850). Another factor that contributed to

the popularization of the cult, examined in the second section, was the emergence of private, regional temples outside the parameters of the state bureaucracy. These temples and small chapels were established by monks who traveled to distant provinces to proselytize to the common people, and by local notables and elites in the various regions.

### **YAKUSHI KEKA RITUALS IN THE NINTH CENTURY**

As we have seen, in the Nara period the court practiced Yakushi *keka* rituals primarily to preserve the health and longevity of the ruling sovereign, whose deeds and actions could affect the country directly. In the early Heian period, emperors also commanded the performance of Yakushi *keka* rites not only for their own health, but also to placate vengeful spirits (*onryō*). Yakushi's increasing reputation as a pacifier of malevolent spirits (which were believed to cause natural disasters such as epidemics and droughts) developed in tandem with the transformation of *keka*. Consequently, the court turned to issuing Yakushi *keka* rituals in order to quell these malicious forces. With such interest in performing Yakushi *keka* to appease *onryō*, Yakushi came to be perceived as having apotropaic powers, in addition to his therapeutic qualities. The cult of Yakushi, therefore, reflected a deep concern for spirit appeasement.

The concept of vengeful spirits, in part, functioned as a deterrent to rulers for political malfeasance. As Neil McMullin has noted, the power of vengeful spirits was rooted in other beliefs, "intimately related to the ancient Chinese belief that the activities of the rulers had cosmic consequences in that reprehensible political activities were believed to result in disease and other calamities."<sup>1</sup> This may be one reason why so many Heian rulers actively sought out potent rites (whether Buddhist, Yin-Yang, or Shinto) that could conquer the dreaded spirits. For example, some scholars assert that a major factor motivating Emperor Kanmu's transfer of the capital from Nara, to the ill-fated Nagaoka,

and finally to Heiankyō, was his fear of the ghost of his younger brother, Prince Sawara (ca. 750–785). Although there were other compelling reasons for Kanmu's decision to abandon Nagaoka in favor of Heiankyō, the emperor's fear of a specific vengeful spirit was clearly among them.<sup>2</sup>

Kanmu's strategies for dealing with angry ghosts are quite revealing of how the court relied upon Buddhist rituals not only for healing purposes, but also for appeasing malevolent supernatural powers. Prince Sawara, the fifth son of Emperor Kōnin (r. 770–781) and Kanmu's brother, was accused of plotting the assassination of Fujiwara no Tanetsugu (737–785), Kanmu's chief political adviser.<sup>3</sup> After Tanetsugu was assassinated in Nagaoka in 785, Prince Sawara was implicated and exiled to the island of Awaji, but he starved himself to death en route to protest his innocence.<sup>4</sup> Following the prince's death, Nagaoka was plagued by famine, devastating floods, and epidemics. Around the same time, Kanmu's family members began dying in succession, beginning with his junior consort, Fujiwara no Tabiko (759–788); followed by his mother, Takano no Niigasa (d. 790); and soon after, his principal consort, Fujiwara no Otomuro (760–790). His son, the Crown Prince Ate (774–824), was also afflicted by illness for about three years, from 790 to 793.<sup>5</sup> It was rumored that Prince Sawara's angry spirit was the cause of these unfortunate events.

The endless series of tragic events finally compelled Kanmu to act, and to deal directly with Prince Sawara's vengeful ghost, starting with rites of "repenting" for his actions. According to *Nihon kōki* (840), on 796.10.17, forty Buddhist priests were invited to perform Yakushi *keka* at the imperial palace for seventeen consecutive days.<sup>6</sup> In 797, Kanmu sent two Buddhist priests to Awaji to perform a "sutra-reading repentance ritual" (*tenkyō keka*) and recite apologies to the dead prince. These rites did not seem to be particularly successful for curing Prince Ate's chronic illness, however, because on 799.2.15, Kanmu ordered offerings to be sent to Awaji.<sup>7</sup>

Emperor Kanmu's extreme anxiety over vengeful spirits is well demonstrated by the series of

subsequent actions he took from 800 to 805 to pacify the restless spirits of his dead adversaries. On 800.7.22, he granted Prince Sawara the posthumous title of “Heavenly Sovereign (i.e., Emperor) Sudō,” a title and position that Sawara was never able to assume in life. Furthermore, on 805.1.14, Kanmu had a temple constructed in Awaji, with rites and offerings made to appease Sawara’s restless spirit.<sup>8</sup> Kanmu also granted a royal title to another former political rival, Princess Inoe (Inoe no Naishinnō; 717–775), who was posthumously given the title of “royal consort” (*kōgō*). Princess Inoe was one of the consorts to Emperor Kōnin, Kanmu’s father. She and her son, Prince Osabe (751–775), were accused of plotting against Kōnin and imprisoned in 772. They both died three years later, in 775.<sup>9</sup> On 805.2.6, Kanmu ordered one hundred and fifty Buddhist priests to recite the *Sutra of Great Wisdom* (S: *Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-sūtra*; J: *Dai hannya-kyō*) at the Shungūbō palace. He also ordered the construction of a small granary at Reianji, where thirty sheaves of rice, one hundred and fifty *ton* of tribute cloth (*chōfu*), and one hundred and fifty *ton* of commuted tax cloth (*yōfu*) were offered to appease the wrathful spirit of the prince—Kanmu’s half brother—and lay it to rest permanently.<sup>10</sup>

In his extended efforts to appease vengeful ghosts, Kanmu called on the famous Tendai monk Saichō to perform a *keka* ritual at the palace. On 805.8.9, Saichō, who had recently returned from China, was asked to present himself at court and perform the rite in order to prevent the recurrence of an earthquake.<sup>11</sup> Saichō’s *keka* was also directed toward curing Kanmu’s persistent ill health, believed to be caused by Prince Sawara’s angry spirit. For this same reason, just ten days earlier, the goods brought back from China by the official envoys (*kentōshi*) had been distributed to the tombs of Emperors Tenji, Kōnin, and Sudō.<sup>12</sup>

Kanmu not only turned to Yakushi and the *keka* rite to thwart malicious spirits, but also relied on Yakushi as the protective deity of the newly established capital. His faith in this Buddha was reflected in the establishment of Kyōō Gokokuji, “Temple

for the Defense of the Nation by Means of the King of Doctrines,” also known as Tōji.<sup>13</sup> The principal icon of worship at Tōji was a monumental seated Yakushi enshrined in its Golden Hall.<sup>14</sup> Such protection of the capital meant that the city was considered a safe haven from vengeful spirits and epidemics, and that an abundant harvest was assured. This prosperity could visit Heiankyō because *keka* rites had mollified the destructive forces of malevolent spirits.

In addition to his abilities to cure illness, Yakushi’s powers for exorcising vengeful spirits were even more highly esteemed in early Heian society. The sutras dedicated to Yakushi promote the deity as an effective vanquisher of malicious entities. The two best-known and most circulated Yakushi scriptures, translated by Xuanzang and Yijing, both state,

If there is a person who suddenly has nightmares, who sees all sorts of evil apparitions ... or if a hundred ominous portents materialize in his home—if that person uses all sorts of marvelous and valuable utensils to perform reverent *pūjā* to that Lord Master of Healing, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata, then the nightmares, evil apparitions, and all inauspicious things will disappear, unable to cause harm.<sup>15</sup>

In Japan, these “evil apparitions” were interpreted as vengeful spirits who plagued the court and perpetuated disease and other harmful circumstances.

Vengeful spirits were intimately tied to pollution (*kegare*), which necessitated ritual purification (in this case, exorcism) for the restoration of order.<sup>16</sup> According to the historian Herman Ooms, notions of purity and pollution as distinct politico-religious values emerged at the end of the seventh century and became a central concern by the Heian period. As the capital, where the emperor resided and ruled, Heiankyō periodically had to be ritually cleansed of malignant physical and spiritual matter. By the end of the seventh century, the great purification ceremony (*Ōharae*)—performed on the last days of the sixth and twelfth months for protecting the realm against calamities—had been

institutionalized; this ritual continued into the Heian period.<sup>17</sup> Ooms explains the emphasis on purity during this time by stating that, "... a full-fledged casuistry developed, legal, as well as ritual, overdetermining the daily life and routines of officials and commoners living in the capital."<sup>18</sup> One such rite created in the ninth century for such purposes was the *goryō-e*, performed to ward off epidemics by appeasing the august spirits of those who died while falsely accused of political intrigue. The court's preoccupation with *Yakushi keka*, therefore, was part of a ritual obsession with purification rites and exorcisms, all performed for safeguarding the state.

In the ninth century, the *Yakushi keka* ritual also underwent a transformation, becoming a two-part ceremony in which a continuous reading of sutras (*tendoku*) was performed throughout the day. At night, elaborate offerings and confessions of transgressions were made in front of an image of *Yakushi*.<sup>19</sup> This two-part *Yakushi keka* seems to have been developed during Emperor Ninmyō's reign, when it was adopted as a state ritual for averting and suppressing disaster.<sup>20</sup> In fact, a two-part *Yakushi keka* is referenced in an edict passed by Emperor Ninmyō in the sixth month of 833:

I have heard that many young people have died. If I do not practice good, how can I remove misfortunes? I order all of the provinces and plead with the ascetic practitioners, twenty from the large provinces, seventeen from the upper, fourteen from the middle, and ten from the lower provinces, to recite the *Diamond Wisdom Sutra* and practice *Yakushi keka* for three days.<sup>21</sup>

The above edict illuminates Ninmyō's sense of moral obligation to his subjects, which he addresses by commanding the performance of large-scale *Yakushi keka*.

*Yakushi keka* rites were usually performed in prominent temples in the Five Main Provinces surrounding the capital region.<sup>22</sup> One entry from *Shoku Nihon kōki* (869) records that an edict promulgated by Emperor Ninmyō on 837.4.25 ordered twenty temples in the Five Main Provinces to

conduct the rites.<sup>23</sup> Renowned temples in the capital, such as Tōji and Saiji, and in the former capitals of Asuka (Hōryūji, Moto Gangōji), Fujiwarakyō, Naniwa, Ōtsu, and Nara (Yakushiji, Shin Yakushiji, and Tōdaiji, among others) were chosen, as well as temples on sacred mountains that overlooked the capital, such as Jingoji and Enryakuji. Most of these temples were undoubtedly selected by Ninmyō for this task because they enshrined *Yakushi* images as their principal icons of worship.

In addition to famed temples in the Five Main Provinces, the state-sponsored provincial monasteries also actively participated in *Yakushi keka* rites.<sup>24</sup> From the time *kokubunji* were established by Emperor Shōmu in 741, they primarily functioned to offer prayers for the welfare of the emperor, the state, and the country. When Shōmu set up the system of *kokubunji* and *kokubunniji*, he wanted to establish a nationwide network of Buddhist temples in the provinces to centralize his power under the auspices of state Buddhism. Each monastery and nunnery was to house twenty monks and ten nuns, respectively; their mission was to recite the scriptures (in particular, the *Sutra of Golden Light*) and pray for the peace and prosperity of the entire realm. Each of the *kokubunji* were to have a seven-story pagoda and a Golden Hall enshrining a golden Buddha statue of monumental *jōroku* size.<sup>25</sup> The main purpose of these temples during the Nara period was to serve as sacred institutions that offered continuous sutra recitation for the well-being of the whole country. Interestingly, by the early Heian period, the role of these temples had shifted as they became major centers for *Yakushi keka* rituals.

Furthermore, the increased belief in and fear of disease-causing gods (*ekijin*) and vengeful spirits led to the installation of many *Yakushi* icons in the state monasteries.<sup>26</sup> The high ratio of *Yakushi* images in extant *kokubunji* is one indicator that the deity had become one of the dominant figures of worship in these temples during the Heian period.<sup>27</sup> Originally, *kokubunji* enshrined Shaka images. According to Itō Shirō, many *kokubunji* destroyed by fires and other catastrophes during the Hōki era

(770–780) later came to enshrine Yakushi icons when they were rebuilt.<sup>28</sup> Nishio Masahito's research indicates that among the fifty-two *kokubunji* that can still be accounted for today, thirty-six contain principal icons that are still identifiable, and an overwhelming number of these represent Yakushi.<sup>29</sup>

Yakushi *keka* were often issued to deal particularly with epidemics (usually smallpox) or other calamitous events such as floods and famines.<sup>30</sup> An edict issued by emperor Ninmyō's court specifically ordered Yakushi *keka* after a very severe epidemic. Edicts from 837, 840, and 842 noted in *Nihon giryaku* (a late-Heian history) were all issued after famines that caused much suffering throughout the country.<sup>31</sup> The 837 edict ordered *kokubunji* priests to perform a reading of the *Diamond Wisdom Sutra* (S: *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*; J: *Kongō hannya-kyō*) during the day, and Yakushi *keka* services in the evenings for three days, due to an epidemic that resulted in a nationwide famine.<sup>32</sup> On 840.6.13, Emperor Ninmyō ordered the same schedule of rituals for seven days in the Five Main Provinces after another famine following a poor harvest. The next day, these rituals were performed in the Fifteen Great Temples of Nara and Kyoto.<sup>33</sup> On 842.3.15, during a drought, Ninmyō again ordered the *Diamond Wisdom Sutra* to be read during the day and Yakushi *keka* to be practiced at night by twenty priests in each of the *kokubunji* throughout the country.<sup>34</sup>

Although the Yakushi *keka* was perceived as an efficacious rite for alleviating the hardships caused by natural disasters, it was also practiced as an effective preventive measure against such calamities.<sup>35</sup> An edict of 834.4.6, also issued by Ninmyō, reflects this safeguarding aspect of Yakushi *keka*:

I command that, in order to prevent misfortune before its advent, ascetic practitioners shall be chosen from the Five Main Provinces and Provinces along the Seven Highways to read and recite the *Diamond Wisdom Sutra* during the day and perform Yakushi *keka* during the night for three days and three nights at the provincial monasteries.<sup>36</sup>

As demonstrated by this edict, Yakushi *keka* were ordered for preventing disasters and forestalling epidemics from the time of Ninmyō's reign.

Likewise, Nakano Genzō's research on certain Buddhist temples contains interesting findings about the importance of Yakushi *keka* rituals for the prevention of natural calamities. His insights center on the temples built along the Kizugawa, a major river linking Kyoto to Nara and an important transportation route during the Heian period. Many of these temples (Chōkōji in Jōyō city, Hōmyōji in Kasagi-chō, and Yakushiji in Wazuka-chō, to name a few), which enshrined early-Heian Yakushi images, were built in areas that were highly susceptible to flooding.<sup>37</sup> Through his meticulous examination of flood hazard maps from these regions, Nakano convincingly argues that these temples were originally established as sites specifically for the performance of Yakushi *keka* to pray for the prevention and mitigation of disastrous floods. What Nakano's research suggests is that even smaller private temples, although they may not have participated in the state-sponsored Yakushi *keka* noted in *Shoku Nihongi* and other historical records, also enshrined Yakushi icons for use in *keka*, especially to manage local natural disasters such as floods.

The role of the specialists who led Yakushi *keka* rites requires some consideration here. The aforementioned royal edicts indicate that often, official state-sponsored Yakushi *keka* called for the participation of ascetic practitioners known as *gyōja*. Many of these *gyōja* resided in sacred mountains in order to undergo austerities. Moreover, the edict of 834.4.6 shows that these priests were called in from "the Five Main Provinces and Provinces along the Seven Highways."<sup>38</sup> As *keka* fundamentally included the idea of repentance through austerities and ablutions, skilled *gyōja* from all areas were often brought in to perform Yakushi *keka* alongside the *kokubunji* monks.<sup>39</sup> As representatives of the emperor and the state, *gyōja* and *kokubunji* priests together performed *keka* in front of Yakushi images to confess their transgressions and cultivate goodness through the observance of the precepts

(*shūzen*). These collective actions, in turn, invoked Yakushi to eliminate their bad karma and generate the desired outcomes.<sup>40</sup>

Not only were Yakushi's powers relied upon to suppress or safeguard against disasters, but they were also harnessed to protect the borders of the capital and the Five Main Provinces from invasion by malicious spiritual entities, viewed as the harbingers of such natural calamities. The temples in these border areas, situated in mountainous regions, therefore were chosen to perform Yakushi *keka*. Jingoji and Enryakuji, for example, stood over Heiankyō in the geomantically significant directions of the northwest and northeast, on Mt. Takao and Mt. Hiei, respectively. According to Nagaoka Ryūsaku, these mountains came to be included among the "Seven Lofty Mountains" (*Shichikōzan*), references to which appear in *Kuchizusami*, written by Minamoto no Tamenori (d. 1011) in 970.<sup>41</sup> Tamenori explains that a royal edict issued on 836.3.10 named the mountains of Hiei, Hira, Ibuki, Kabu, Atago, Kinpu, and Katsuragi as the Seven Lofty Mountains, and required that Yakushi *keka* be performed at these sites.<sup>42</sup> These seven mountains were all nestled between the provincial borders, and all overlooked the capital.

The quelling of angry spirits and elimination of disasters ensured a healthy population, which in turn guaranteed good harvests and general abundance. It is therefore not surprising that the powers of Yakushi, invoked through *keka*, were often directed specifically through prayers for fertile crops. *Shakke kanpanki* (Records of Ecclesiastic Positions and Ranks), written by Prince Son'en (1298–1356) in 1335, mentions a royal edict proclaiming that Yakushi *keka* were to be held for forty-nine days in the spring and autumn to pray for plentiful yields; these *keka* were to be performed by "the *ācārya* (senior monks) of the Seven Lofty Mountains" (*Shichikōzan ajari*).<sup>43</sup> The belief that a well-protected border would enable healthy peasants to produce a good harvest is exemplified in a passage for 824.9.27 from *Ruijū kokushi* (892):

Seventeen monks who understand true words will be appointed to always practice the three Mysteries on behalf of the kingdom .... In addition, twenty-seven newly ordained monks of rectitude will be appointed to recite the *Sutra of Humane Kings* to protect the kingdom's borders, as well as for the regulation of the winds and rain and to pray for the ripening of the five crops.<sup>44</sup> These sutras will be recited in turn during the day and night without interruption.<sup>45</sup>

The inclusion of the phrase "to pray for the ripening of the five crops" reveals that a bountiful harvest was linked to a well-protected realm.

The numerous examples given above clearly indicate that, in the early Heian period, Yakushi came to be viewed not only as a healing deity, but more importantly, as a Buddha who could quell malicious spirits, ensure a prosperous harvest, and ultimately guarantee the well-being of the entire country.

## YAKUSHI WORSHIP IN THE DISTANT PROVINCES

In addition to the state-sponsored institutions, private temples were also built in greater frequency and number during the early Heian period.<sup>46</sup> Buddhist monks from the Kinai region traveled far to promulgate Buddhists teachings, and helped to establish temples for the local communities in the areas they visited.<sup>47</sup> This trend also contributed largely to the dissemination of Yakushi worship among the lower social classes throughout Japan. State policies also contributed to this process. For example, in the early Nara period, the Japanese state expanded its territories eastward, establishing the provinces of Mutsu and Dewa<sup>48</sup> in a region that was ruled by a tough and tenacious group of people known as the Emishi, who vehemently resisted colonization.<sup>49</sup> As part of its efforts to expand the realm and centralize its rule, the Nara state repeatedly sent troops to suppress and conquer the Emishi, and also sent people from both the Kinai and outlying Kantō regions to form settlements there.<sup>50</sup> In the mid-eighth century, Emperor

Shōmu commanded provincial monasteries and nunneries to be built in both Mutsu and Dewa as yet another part of the state's program to colonize the Emishi and expand the Buddhist state.

By the ninth and tenth centuries, Buddhist teachings had spread to these provinces. Consequently, numerous small, private temples were built for the sake of the settlers, as well as for the acculturated Emishi who had pledged allegiance to the Japanese state. The dissemination of Buddhism to this region was largely a product of the activities of monks from the Nara monasteries (such as Tōdaiji), and also of the efforts of Tendai monks from Enryakuji. The early-Heian Yakushi statues in the temples of Kokusekiji and Shōjōji exemplify the spread of Buddhism to the remote Tōhoku region (Northeastern Japan).

### Kokusekiji Yakushi

Kokusekiji, a temple located in present-day Iwate Prefecture (formerly part of Mutsu Province), enshrines a ninth-century seated Yakushi statue (fig. 8). The history of Kokusekiji and its principal Yakushi icon demonstrates that, by the early Heian period, private temples were already well established in these northern regions. According to the temple's founding story (*engi*), Kokusekiji was established in 729 by the eminent Nara-period Buddhist priest Gyōki (668–749).<sup>51</sup> In 849, the Tendai priest Ennin (794–864) revitalized Kokusekiji by converting it into a large Tendai temple whose precincts encompassed more than forty-eight buildings. Ennin is also credited for officially bestowing the name Myōhōzan Kokusekiji (Black Rock Temple of Mt. Myōhō) upon the temple.<sup>52</sup> Unfortunately, numerous later fires repeatedly damaged the site; in 1881, it was rebuilt in its current small incarnation, which now consists of only one main worship hall.

The Yakushi statue from Kokusekiji is a ninth-century image that exhibits stylistic and technical features employed in both the late Nara and early Heian periods. Whereas in the eighth century, Buddhist statues were made from a variety of materials (such as bronze, clay, and dry lacquer), in

the ninth century they were predominantly made out of wood using the single-block (*ichiboku*) technique.<sup>53</sup> In general, many of these ninth-century statues were left unpainted, and have thus been termed "pure-wood" (or "plain-wood") images by scholars.<sup>54</sup> This Yakushi statue, dated to Jōgan 4 (862), is carved out of *katsura* wood (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*), using the single-block technique. Rather than being kept in an unpainted state, however, the statue was once coated with a layer of lacquer and then finished with an application of gold leaf. This stylistic overlay reflects a Nara-period aesthetic found on wood-core dry-lacquer statues.<sup>55</sup> At the same time, some of the formal features of the image reflect the stylistic norms of the ninth century: an awe-inspiring quality is created by the thick, massive body, which is accentuated by the sharply delineated folds of the drapery. This striking demeanor is more typical of ninth-century icons in the "pure-wood" group.<sup>56</sup> Carved out with deep incisions, the face has a rather severe expression due to the combined effect of the large *ūrṇā*, the very broad nose with prominent nostrils, and the full, firm lips. The sharply carved eyes with slightly pointed corners also contribute to the statue's firm, determined expression. The snail-shell curls are large in proportion to the size of the head, a feature also characteristic of many ninth-century statues of the "pure-wood" group.

Although the identity of the creator of the Kokusekiji Yakushi image is unknown to us, he has clearly demonstrated his knowledge of a new mode of sculptural motifs that were in vogue during the early Heian period. For instance, the swirling pattern (*ka mon*) carved on the right shoulder of the figure's monastic robe reflects a stylistic trend developed in the ninth century. Other single-block statues in the Kinai region also display this swirl motif on their drapery folds. It is found, for example, on the left calf of the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi (fig. 9); the Yakushi statue at Jingōji also has this decorative swirl on its back.

The medicine jar held in the Kokusekiji Yakushi's left hand also reflects new iconographical



8 *Seated Yakushi*. 862. Wood, single-block construction, with lacquer and gold leaf. H. 126 cm. Kokusekiji, Iwate Prefecture.



9 Seated Yakushi. 9th century. Wood, single-block construction, with touches of polychrome. H. 191.5 cm.  
Shin Yakushiji, Nara Prefecture.

developments of the ninth century. Iconographical traits of Yakushi statues from the Hakuhō and Nara periods include a seated posture, the right hand raised in *abhaya mudrā*, and the left hand resting on (or slightly above) the left leg with the palm facing upward. These earlier Yakushi do not hold any objects (see figs. 2 and 3). The lack of a medicine jar may be attributed to the fact that the two most important Yakushi sutras in Japan (those translated by Xuanzang and Yijing) make no mention of this implement. Most Yakushi images from the Heian period and later, however, hold a medicine jar in the left palm, indicating that this iconographical feature was introduced to Japan during this time. In fact, according to Abé, the earliest text to reference medicine jars held by Yakushi images is *Yakushi nyorai nenju giki* (Ritual Manual for Invoking the Buddha Yakushi),<sup>57</sup> transmitted to Japan by Kūkai in the ninth century.<sup>58</sup>

Currently, the Kokusekiji Yakushi holds a large, lidded medicine jar in his left hand. This would indicate that the Buddhist priest who lived at the temple at the time of the image's carving was knowledgeable about the latest Buddhist doctrinal and iconographical developments, which suggests that he was trained in Nara before settling in the northeast. The medicine jar, however, was carefully analyzed by Kuno Takeshi and determined to be a later restoration, thereby complicating the issue of whether the statue held one at the time of its creation. We therefore must look to other evidence to see if a medicine jar was original to the image.<sup>59</sup>

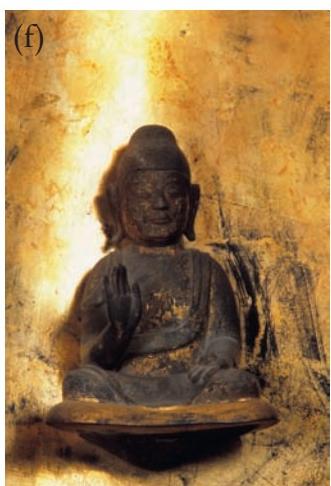
The key to determining whether or not the Kokusekiji image reflects new iconographical developments is found in its mandorla, which is adorned by seven small, seated Buddha images carved in the round. These small Buddha images, often placed on mandorlas, are known as *kebutsu*, or "Manifestation Buddhas" (S: *nirmāṇa-buddha*). Many Yakushi images from the Hakuhō and Nara periods have small Manifestation Buddhas on their mandorlas. These small figures clasp their hands, which are hidden inside their sleeves, in front of their chests (see fig. 2).<sup>60</sup> More specifically, earlier

Manifestation Buddhas collectively represent the Seven Buddhas of the Past (J: *kako Shichibutsu*; S: *Sapta Buddha*), and are conceptually comprised of Śākyamuni plus three Buddhas from preceding ages and three from later ages.<sup>61</sup>

Even though the extant mandorla from the Kokusekiji image also is a later restoration, the seven small Buddhas have been analyzed as being the ninth-century originals.<sup>62</sup> These small wooden Buddhas, however, do not clasp their hands; rather, they each hold a medicine jar in the left palm, demonstrating that they were envisioned specifically as manifestations of Yakushi and not the Seven Buddhas of the Past (fig. 10). This means that the central Yakushi image, whose mandorla of light is emitting smaller Yakushi manifestations, must have held a medicine jar originally, much like his *kebutsu*.<sup>63</sup>

As for the patrons and date of this Yakushi image, an inscription found inside the cavity of the statue refers to four local kinship groups (the Mononobe, Ujibe, Hosekibe, and Nukatabe), along with the year of the icon's creation, Jōgan 4 (862). Although little is known about these kinship groups, these names were not typically assigned to assimilated Emishi indigenes, but were well known in the capital. For this reason, Mimi Yiengpruksawan suggests that Kokusekiji was most likely built by settlers from the Kinai region.<sup>64</sup> Satō Akio and Kuno Takeshi both believe that these kinship groups jointly commissioned and donated the Yakushi statue to the temple, out of fear of the Emishi.<sup>65</sup>

Kokusekiji was most likely a private temple, supported by local settlers. When we think about these small, private Buddhist institutions established in remote areas far from the cultural centers of Japan, we must surmise that the construction of the temple, including the selection and production of its icons, had to be carried out by Buddhist priests with the proper training and knowledge. Such priests must have been those who had trained in the Nara monasteries or at the Tendai headquarters at Enryakuji, who for one reason or another had left the Kinai region and traveled great distances to promote Buddhist teachings to the local populace.



10a,b,c,d,e,f,g Detail of Yakushi *kebutsu* on the mandorla, *Seated Yakushi*. Kokusekiji.

Whether or not the renowned Tendai priest Ennin revitalized Kokusekiji, as the temple's *engi* states, the mention of his name suggests that the temple and its icons—including the Yakushi image—were most likely made under the guidance of a Tendai priest who had been sent by Enryakuji to proselytize to the local settlers. In addition, a close analysis of the statue reveals that it reflects (and always has reflected) the new iconographical feature of the medicine jar introduced in the ninth century by Kūkai. Thus the medicine jar in the Yakushi figure's hand also points to the supervision of a Tendai priest who would have been familiar with the new religious ideas then in vogue in the Kii-nai region.

### **Shōjōji Yakushi**

Inside the temple Shōjōji in present-day Fukushima Prefecture (formerly the southern part of Mutsu Province), another seated Yakushi statue demonstrates that Buddhist icon production and the cult of Yakushi had spread from the capital to the north in the ninth century (fig. 11). In addition to the Yakushi, the temple also owns a number of other early-Heian statues, including a Shō Kannon (S: Ārya Avalokiteśvara), an unidentified heavenly Ten (S: deva), a Jūichimen (or Eleven-Headed) Kannon (S: Ekādaśamukha Avalokiteśvara), two Jizō (S: Kṣitigarbha), and a set of Four Guardian Kings, or Shitennō (S: Lokapālas). These images are the only extant remains from a grand temple that once boasted seven worship halls during the Heian period.

Currently there are no written records that provide details of Shōjōji's early history. Nevertheless, the temple is closely associated with a Kōfukuji-trained monk from Nara by the name of Tokuitsu (ca. 780–ca. 842), a talented priest who is best known for his intellectual debates with Saichō, which took place from 817 to 821. He also became one of the main proponents of Buddhist teachings in the Aizu district of Mutsu Province. Biographical accounts documenting Tokuitsu's life state that he was a disciple of the eminent Kōfukuji monk Shūen (771–ca. 835).<sup>66</sup> After completing his training there,

Tokuitsu went to Tōdaiji to further his Buddhist studies. At the age of twenty he left for the Eastern provinces to proselytize, first arriving in Hitachi Province to found Chūzenji at Mt. Tsukuba. He later moved to the Aizu district of Mutsu and established the temple Enichiji.<sup>67</sup>

Shōjōji's founding legend states that Tokuitsu founded the temple in either 807 or 810; however, no reliable records exist to confirm this.<sup>68</sup> (Tokuitsu's affiliation with Enichiji in Aizu, on the other hand, is highly plausible based on the information contained in written records.) According to Satō Akio, there are currently forty temples in the Kantō and Tōhoku regions that claim Tokuitsu as their founder. Of these forty, twenty-six are in Fukushima Prefecture, where Shōjōji and Enichiji are located. Most of these temples have a founding date of about 806 or 808; therefore, Satō surmises that many of them were more likely established by Tokuitsu's disciples or followers, as it is unlikely that Tokuitsu himself would have been able to found so many temples in such a short period of time.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, these legends suggest that many of these temples were affiliated with either Tokuitsu or other Kōfukuji priests.

According to his biographies, Tokuitsu was hailed as a “bodhisattva” by the local population and had many disciples. He is said to have eaten a meager diet and worn torn clothes.<sup>70</sup> In a letter written by Kūkai to Tokuitsu in 815, the Shingon patriarch also refers to Tokuitsu as “Bodhisattva Tokuitsu.” Kūkai goes on to praise the monk for leaving the capital for the “Eastern Country” to proselytize Buddhism to the masses and to perform *tosō* (S: *dhūta*), an ascetic practice for purifying one's body and mind. Kūkai's letter confirms other biographical accounts that state that Tokuitsu was one of many monks who eventually left Nara for the provinces in order to commit their lives to spreading Buddhism to the populace, as well as to pursue an ascetic lifestyle.<sup>71</sup>

A close analysis of the Yakushi statue at Shōjōji points to the likelihood that Tokuitsu or his disciples were involved in its production, despite the lack of written documentation. Like the Kokusekiji



II Seated Yakushi. 9th century. Wood, single-block construction, with lacquer and gold leaf. H. 141.8 cm.  
Shōjōji, Fukushima Prefecture.

Yakushi, the technical, stylistic, and iconographical features displayed by the Shōjōji icon correspond to those found on images produced in Nara in the late eighth century as well as to innovations introduced in the early Heian period. As I have argued above, a monk trained in Nara would have been familiar with both the newest iconographical currents and the stylistic traits of Yakushi icons in the eighth-century capital.

The seated Yakushi is made in the single-block technique using *keyaki* (Japanese Zelkova; *Zelkova serrata*) wood.<sup>72</sup> Buddhist statues from the eighth and ninth centuries are usually made from *kaya* (Japanese nutmeg; *Torreya nucifera*), but as *kaya* is not indigenous to the Tōhoku region, *keyaki* was employed instead.<sup>73</sup> Like the Kokusekiji Yakushi, the Shōjōji image sits on a lotus pedestal, with his right hand raised in *abhaya mudrā* and his left palm open, presenting a lidded medicine jar.<sup>74</sup>

The statue is constructed in a technique called the “split and joined” (*wari-hagi*) method, which was first developed in the ninth century. This technique uses a more efficient method of hollowing out the statue to prevent cracking and to significantly reduce its weight. With the Kokusekiji Yakushi, hollow areas in the back of the head and torso were carved out and then covered with a board. In the case of the Shōjōji image, the head and torso were first carved from a single block of wood, then split in half down the middle and hollowed out. When the two pieces were refitted, a single hollow space remained in the center. This technique is seen as a further advancement of the *ichiboku* technique. The Shōjōji Yakushi is noteworthy as one of the earliest extant examples of a statue made with this method. One example from Nara is the large, seated Yakushi at Shin Yakushiji (fig. 9), dated to the late eighth or early ninth century.<sup>75</sup> The Shōjōji Yakushi, therefore, was made in a method that had been invented in Nara, and about which Tokuitsu (and certainly his disciples) would have known.

Like the Kokusekiji image, the overall aesthetic appearance of this Yakushi reflects both the earlier stylistic mode of wood-core dry-lacquer statues from the late Nara period, and ninth-century pure-

wood sculptures. The image also was once covered in lacquer and then gold leaf, again like late-Nara dry-lacquer statues. In this regard, the Shōjōji Yakushi seems to exhibit an older sculptural mode compared to the Shin Yakushiji Yakushi, which was clearly made as a pure-wood image, the natural grain of the wood left exposed. Moreover, the Shōjōji Yakushi's boat-shaped mandorla, made of *sugi* (Japanese cedar; *Cryptomeria japonica*), displays an embossed decorative pattern of intertwined grapevines (*budō karakusa moyō*). This embossed grapevine motif is also found on the pedestal of the eighth-century, bronze Yakushi statue at Nara's Yakushiji, indicating that the maker of the Shōjōji image was familiar with this earlier stylistic trend.

The statue is quite large for a seated, wood image, measuring 141.8 centimeters in height. It has a bulky, heavy-set torso, a feature of many ninth-century pure-wood Buddha statues (such as the Shin Yakushiji image). The snail-shell curls on the head are also very large, carved out separately and then attached to the image. Early Heian stylistic trends can also be found in the facial features. The face is very fleshy, and the eyes—with strongly delineated lids and upturned outer corners—are proportionately small.<sup>76</sup> The mouth is curved in a pout, with a thick upper lip. The overall fleshiness of the face is a characteristic found commonly on early-Heian images. As for the monastic garments, the outer robe covers both shoulders in a manner known as *tsūken*, and deeply carved folds form a uniform U-shape down the abdomen, as well as on each leg. These folds are carved in a stylized pattern of alternating deep and shallow grooves that resembles a “rolling-wave” arrangement (*honpashiki*), a decorative carving technique seen prevalently on early-Heian wood images. In these ways, the Shōjōji Yakushi shares the same awe-inspiring demeanor of both the Kokusekiji and Shin Yakushiji Yakushi images.

The Yakushi icons from Kokusekiji and Shōjōji attest to the spread of the Yakushi cult in regions far from the capital during the early Heian period. These icons tell the story of how Yakushi was

worshipped by the local populace as a potent deity who could deliver them from the pain and suffering of the harsh Northern lifestyle, often mired in warfare, disease, and natural calamities. They also display an advanced knowledge of iconographical and stylistic trends in Buddhist icon production, incorporating aesthetic and technical features of both the Nara and early-Heian periods. Although the identities of the icons' makers cannot be proven, the images stand as evidence of the presence of trained Buddhist monks from Nara who had traveled to these remote regions in order to deliver Buddhist teachings to the local residents.

Yet another major development in the cult of Yakushi took place in the early Heian period, as Yakushi worship became an inclusive phenomenon that spread beyond the Kinai region to the farthest reaches of the Japanese mainland. Historical records have revealed that the Yakushi *keka* rite was the predominant ritual performed in Heiankyō

and the prominent state-sponsored temples, many of which enshrined Yakushi as their principal icon of worship. These *keka* rites were issued regularly by the state for the welfare of the entire country. At this time, the Medicine Buddha's role expanded and became more complex. The fear of vengeful spirits among the ruling elite, and the notion that these wrathful entities could cause extensive damage on a national scale, also fostered a greater reliance upon this deity. Yakushi was no longer merely a supernatural doctor to call upon when one was sick; he was now transformed into an apotropaic deity who could pacify malevolent forces. Nor was he exclusively monopolized by the ruling elite, as in previous periods. The steady growth of smaller, private temples, and the spread of Buddhism outside the Kinai region by itinerant priests, delivered Yakushi to a greater segment of the Japanese population.



## 3

# Saichō's Standing Yakushi and Its Iconic Legacy

THE HEIAN PERIOD IN JAPAN is conventionally characterized as a time when the aristocratic culture of the court thrived, stimulating a flowering of both the religious and secular arts (including music, painting, sculpture, and literature, among others). The discourse on Heian religious art is generally centered on the introduction and development of the Tendai and Shingon schools of Buddhism, founded by Saichō and Kūkai, respectively. Within this art historical discourse, the canonical works of Buddhist art are often associated with the Shingon lineage. Moreover, contemporary scholars commonly regard the latter part of this period as a time when the arts and architecture representing the worship of the Buddha Amida and his Western Pure Land became influential among certain religious circles, as well as among the aristocracy. The influence of the Tendai school on the production of Yakushi icons and rituals in the Heian period has not received the attention it deserves.

In particular, it is surprising that the arts associated with the Tendai school—and more importantly, much of what concerns the history of Enryakuji—have received scant scholarly attention in the West. This neglect stems mainly from the fact that Enryakuji was put to the torch in 1571 by the warlord Oda Nobunaga (1534–1582),

and most of its buildings and icons, along with its library of written documents, were completely consumed by fire:

In order to dispel his disappointment, this day, the twelfth of the ninth Month, [Oda Nobunaga] invested Mount Hiei. Surging around in swarms, Nobunaga's troops in a flash set fire to a multitude of holy Buddhas, shrines, monks' quarters, and sutra scrolls; they spared nothing, from the Central Hall and the Twenty-One Shrines of the Mountain King on down. How miserable it was to see it all reduced to ashes!

The above excerpt graphically describes the tragic burning of Enryakuji. Because of the destruction of the temple's material culture, scholars have been convinced that simply not enough tangible sources remain for conducting proper research on Enryakuji's icons and ritual objects.<sup>2</sup> In addition, art historians (including myself) are less likely to conduct research on things they cannot visibly apprehend. Nevertheless, I believe that despite the limited written sources and material remains related to Enryakuji and the Tendai school, such research is an endeavor that must be braved if we are ever to have a comprehensive picture of Heian religious and artistic culture. This chapter, therefore, brings together descriptive documentation and interpretive analyses in order to reconstruct one of the most important early Heian images that was destroyed in the burning of the temple.

*Standing Yakushi*. Tōshōdaiji (former Lecture Hall), detail of fig. 12.

The object of our inquiry here is a Yakushi statue that purportedly belonged to Saichō himself. Although the intellectual endeavors of both Saichō and Kūkai have been studied extensively, very little is known about Saichō's Medicine Buddha image or his personal dedication to the deity. The fire destroyed the physical remnants of this icon, which not only belonged to the great religious teacher, but also was associated with the Central Hall (Konpon Chūdō), the oldest and most important ritual space in the Enryakuji complex.<sup>3</sup>

Several extant sources provide information on Saichō's Yakushi icon. Although copies survive of two biographies of Saichō—*Eizan daishiden* (Biography of the Great Teacher of Mt. Hiei), written by his disciple Ichijō Chū soon after the master's death; and *Denjutsu issinkaimon* (Concerning the Essay on the One-Mind Precept), written by another disciple, Kojō (779–858)<sup>4</sup>—many of the details of his interest in Yakushi come to us from later fourteenth-century sources, such as the temple histories *Sanmon dōshaki* (Records of the Mountain Gate Buildings), *Kuin bukkakushō* (Records of the Nine Halls and Buddhist Pavilions), and *Eigaku yōki* (Important Records of Mt. Hiei).<sup>5</sup> These three sources offer accounts of the Enryakuji complex with records of key events pertaining to the monastery, including biographical summaries of its high-ranking Tendai priests and a description of the main rituals performed there. Many of these later sources may be hagiographical in nature, combining historical facts with legendary anecdotes. Nevertheless, as long as these documents are examined critically, they can be valuable both for understanding Saichō's personal relationship to Yakushi and for reconstructing details of an icon that no longer exists.

Such analyses of unseen icons, however speculative, are invaluable. In his study of the Zenkōji Amida triad, for example, Donald McCallum faced similar challenges in reconstructing and providing a descriptive analysis of the images, as the original triad housed at the temple is a secret icon (*hibutsu*) that is never displayed to the public.<sup>6</sup> Yet McCallum's work offers significant insights into the

sacred authority that the Zenkōji triad continues to exert over its devotees. Similarly, while I can only provide a generalized description of the Yakushi purportedly owned by Saichō, the resurrection of this icon in narrative form has important consequences: it reveals how a particular icon played a salient role in the life of an illustrious Buddhist master.

This chapter illuminates the role and significance of this Yakushi icon, arguing that the image embodied multiple meanings integral to Saichō's spiritual practice. First, background information on Saichō's early career and his Yakushi icon will be presented in order to place these in their proper religious and historical contexts. Details on Saichō's early training as a Buddhist monk are included, as well as a short history of the worship hall that housed his Yakushi. The second section is dedicated to recreating a conceptual composite of this icon, followed by an iconological analysis that explores its larger associations to continental (Chinese) Buddhist practices of icon veneration.<sup>7</sup> In particular, the specific ritual and iconographical significance that the Yakushi held for Saichō, and later for the entire Tendai community at Enryakuji, will be examined.

## SAICHŌ'S EARLY TRAINING AND ESTABLISHMENT OF HIEIZANJI

Saichō was born in Furuchigō in the province of Ōmi (present-day Shiga Prefecture), perhaps in the year 767 (Tenpyō Jingo 3).<sup>8</sup> His father, Mitsu no Obito Momoe, was a devout Buddhist. At the age of twelve, Saichō went to train under the monk Gyōhyō of the Daianji lineage at Ōmi Kokubunji, where he mainly studied *yuishiki* (consciousness-only; S: *vijñapti-mātratā*) doctrines and Zen meditation techniques. He also mastered the *Lotus Sutra*, the *Sutra of Golden Light*, the *Diamond Wisdom Sutra*, and the *Yakushi Sutra*.<sup>9</sup>

Saichō reportedly became a novice at the age of fourteen, and received the government certificate (*doen*) confirming his new status when he turned

seventeen. In the fourth month of 785, at age nineteen, Saichō went to Tōdaiji in Nara to be officially ordained, and underwent a training period of several months there to observe the so-called Hinayāna precepts (*gusokukai*).<sup>10</sup> According to *Eizan daishiden*, upon completion of his training later that year, Saichō left Nara and retreated to the sacred mountain of Hiei.<sup>11</sup> There he set up a small thatched hut and began to practice a solitary, highly rigorous form of Buddhism.<sup>12</sup> Three years later, he converted his little hut into a worship hall, carved an image of the Buddha Yakushi with his own hands, and enshrined it there.<sup>13</sup> This early devotion to Yakushi, which would continue throughout Saichō's life, created a legacy upheld by subsequent generations of Tendai practitioners.

In order to imagine Saichō's Yakushi icon enshrined in its proper historical and spatial context, we must begin with the origins of Enryakuji's first worship halls. The great temple on Mt. Hiei, one of the most powerful monastic complexes from the late eleventh to the late fourteenth century, had humble origins. Enryakuji began as Hieizanji (literally, "Mt. Hiei Temple"), the structure established shortly after Saichō settled on the mountain in 785.<sup>14</sup> By the 790s, it appears that three independent worship halls had been built side-by-side: a Yakushi Hall (Yakushidō, where Saichō's personal Yakushi statue was enshrined), a Monju Hall (Monjudō, dedicated to the patron deity of the Tendai school, the bodhisattva Monju), and a sutra library (*kyōzō*). Entries from 859 in both *Sanmon dōshaki* and *Kuin bukkakushō* note that the Yakushi Hall, Monju Hall, and library were three separate buildings, each five bays wide, with the Yakushi Hall sandwiched between the other two.<sup>15</sup> Dedication ceremonies were performed for the Monju Hall on New Year's Day of 793, and for the Yakushi Hall on 794.9.3.<sup>16</sup> The opening of these worship halls seems to suggest that Hieizanji was a properly functioning monastic complex by the early 790s, with three small buildings.<sup>17</sup>

The three halls eventually came to be perceived as a single functional entity rather than three independent units; they were referred to

collectively as the Konpon Ichijō Shikan'in (Hall of Calm and Meditation of the One Vehicle) between 797 and 798.<sup>18</sup> The referencing of this space as the "Ichijō Shikan'in" reflected Saichō's growing interest in the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra*, especially the doctrine of the One Vehicle (*ichijō*).<sup>19</sup> *Eizan daishiden* states that, in 801, a Lotus Sutra Lecture was held at Mt. Hiei's Ichijō Shikan'in.<sup>20</sup> During the first half of the ninth century, the Ichijō Shikan'in gradually came to be known as the Konpon Chūdō, or Central Hall.<sup>21</sup> Here, in this Central Hall, Saichō's Yakushi icon stood like a beacon of light for the master and his disciples amidst the rapid expansion of the monastic complex on Mt. Hiei.

## DID SAICHŌ'S YAKUSHI ICON REALLY EXIST?

Whether or not Saichō carved a Yakushi statue himself is impossible to determine with certainty based on the existing documentation. Indeed, in Japan many claims of famous monks carving Buddhist statues with their own hands (*jisaku*) have been made; often these embellishments were designed to enhance the prestige of the associated temple or icon.<sup>22</sup> While Buddhist monks who were skilled at making Buddhist images certainly did exist, it is highly likely that Saichō commissioned a professional to make his Yakushi statue.

Lamentably, Saichō's Yakushi icon was destroyed in a fire, most likely in 1435.<sup>23</sup> Although scholars mention this icon in passing, no art historian has systematically studied the relevant sources in order to fully understand the image. Saichō's Yakushi served as a prototype for many of the existing Heian-period Yakushi statues, particularly those rendered as standing images. Most of these extant Yakushi icons are virtually unknown to people outside the immediate communities where they are found (and still worshipped today). It is therefore beneficial to reconstruct a conceptual composite of this lost statue, and also to examine whether or not this icon truly existed.

According to *Sanmon dōshaki*, in 788, Saichō carved a statue of the Buddha Yakushi and installed it in a small worship hall.<sup>24</sup> As *Sanmon dōshaki* is a fourteenth-century document, and no Heian sources make reference to this occurrence in 788, this dating is rather dubious. Although the idea that Saichō carved a statue of Yakushi may not be fully verifiable, the fact that he enshrined this particular deity as the main icon of worship for his private devotions, in all likelihood, is true. Saeki Arikiyo presents a convincing argument that Saichō's Yakushi statue was enshrined as the main icon of the Central Hall during his lifetime. He notes that, in *Denjutsu isshinkaimon*, Saichō's disciple Kōjō mentions a document from 821 that reads, "the two annual ordinands (*nenbun dosha*) are to be tested in front of the Yakushi icon in the Central Hall"; the document goes on to state that "the two annual ordinands are not appointed to the meditation masters Gishin and Enshō, but to the Central Hall Yakushi...."<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, in a petition submitted to the court in 886, the Tendai priest Ensai requests that five monks be appointed to the Shaka Hall in the Saitō (Western Pagoda) section of Enryakuji. As Ensai writes, "The late teacher, Dharma Seal, Great Master Saichō, built this temple to invoke the protection and prosperity of this country. He made a statue of Yakushi and enshrined it in the Eastern Pagoda area."<sup>26</sup>

Saeki contends not only that Saichō installed a Yakushi icon in the Central Hall, but also that the master carved it with his own hands. The first source cited to make this case is Ensai's petition of 886. The second is a written vow (*ganmon*) made by Ryōgen (912–985), the abbot of Enryakuji, in 980 to commemorate the Central Hall. The introduction to this vow records Ryōgen's statement that Saichō, "praying for Yakushi's extended compassion, made a life-size statue himself, without employing a skilled person...."<sup>27</sup> As it was common practice in Japan to assert that venerable monks made Buddhist icons "with their own hands," it is not possible to prove that Saichō did indeed carve the Yakushi himself. It is more reasonable to assume instead that both Ensai and

Ryōgen were following a hagiographic tradition. Nevertheless, I believe that both of these references to Saichō making a Yakushi icon reveal that the Tendai patriarch had a very special connection to this deity, and that he did enshrine a Yakushi statue on Mt. Hiei, even before the official establishment of "Enryakuji" after his death.<sup>28</sup>

What other details about this Yakushi icon can we extract from the primary sources? From what we can glean from the textual evidence, the image was a standing, life-size, wood statue that measured exactly five *shaku*, five *sun* (roughly corresponding to 167 centimeters) in height. We also know that it was not painted initially, although Saichō's disciple Gishin (781–833) later had it polychromed in accordance with instructions given in his master's will.<sup>29</sup>

The social and cultural context for the choice of a standing, wood Yakushi statue is rather intriguing. On the one hand, Saichō's installment of a Yakushi image reflected the mainstream religious climate of the time. As noted above, in 785, Saichō spent several months in Nara training at Tōdaiji to become a fully ordained priest. The worship of Yakushi was widely practiced by prominent members of the Nara court and aristocracy, and the capital was home to many monumental seated Yakushi statues, such as those enshrined in the Golden Halls of Yakushiji (fig. 4), Kōfukuji, Shin Yakushiji, and Saidaiji.<sup>30</sup> These images reflected the strong presence of the cult of Yakushi in Nara during the eighth century.

On the other hand, Saichō's choice of a standing Yakushi figure was uncommon, and warrants further investigation. It should be emphasized that all of the Yakushi statues in the prominent Nara temples were seated images, whereas Saichō's figure is unmistakably recorded in the sources as having a "standing height of five *shaku*, five *sun*."<sup>31</sup> Given the fact that the leading temples in Nara were all commissioning seated Yakushi images, we must question where Saichō may have acquired the idea of making a standing Yakushi icon.

The most plausible inspiration is a standing wood Buddha purported to be a figure of Yakushi



12 *Standing Yakushi*. Late 8th century. Wood, single-block construction. H. 165 cm. Tōshōdaiji (former Lecture Hall), Nara.

from the former Lecture Hall of Tōshōdaiji in Nara (fig. 12).<sup>32</sup> This image, along with a few other statues made of plain (unpainted) wood, is believed to have been produced under the supervision of the Chinese priest Ganjin (C: Jianzhen; 688–763) after his establishment of Tōshōdaiji in 759.<sup>33</sup> Because the history of the original Lecture Hall where the image was enshrined is uncertain, it is not possible to verify this Buddha's identity; but for various reasons, most scholars—including myself—strongly believe that it is the Buddha Yakushi.<sup>34</sup> Even though the figure's hands are gone, it is clearly evident from the positioning of the arms that this Buddha once held his right hand in the *abhaya mudrā* of reassurance (or the *vitarka mudrā* of preaching, in the case of eighth-century Yakushi images), and the left hand in the wish-granting *varada mudrā*.<sup>35</sup> In the Nara period, only Shaka and Yakushi images would have made these gestures.

Furthermore, by the late eighth century, the cult of Yakushi had become increasingly popular. A number of standing Yakushi statues that are contemporary to the Tōshōdaiji Buddha are extant, such as the icons from Jingōji, Keisokuji (in present-day Shiga Prefecture), and Gangōji (Nara). The fact that the standing Yakushi statue enshrined in Tōshōdaiji's Golden Hall forms the *vitarka mudrā* with the right hand and the *varada mudrā* with the left further strengthens the likelihood that the Lecture Hall Buddha image also represents Yakushi. If the positioning of the hands and arms of the former are compared to that of the latter, they are revealed to be identical. In addition to the images he commissioned for Tōshōdaiji, Ganjin was known to personally possess “auspicious icons” (J: *zuijō*; C: *ruixiang*) of Yakushi, Amida, and Miroku that he brought from China, which reveals his personal preference for these deities.<sup>36</sup> All of these factors strongly suggest that the Buddha from the original Lecture Hall is Yakushi.

It is my conjecture that Saichō modeled his own statue after this plain-wood Yakushi image from Tōshōdaiji, not just with regard to its physical appearance but also in terms of its religious significance as a *danzō* (discussed below). Physically, the

Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall Buddha certainly matches the medium (wood) and the form (standing) recorded for Saichō's work. Most importantly, at 165 centimeters, it is one of the earliest extant examples of a standing wood Yakushi statue that matches the stated height of Saichō's figure.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, in addition to his standing icon, Saichō himself was linked to the Tōshōdaiji Yakushi. Although Saichō never met Ganjin, who first brought Chinese Tiantai (Tendai) teachings to Japan, the great influence of the Chinese priest's tutelage on Saichō and Tendai doctrine is irrefutable, which further supports the theory that Saichō modeled his Yakushi after Ganjin's image.<sup>38</sup> At Tōdaiji, Saichō was officially ordained by the presiding precepts master Nyohō, one of Ganjin's Chinese disciples who had accompanied his master to Japan. Saichō was also in contact with another of Ganjin's disciples, Dōchū, who became one of his greatest benefactors, donating as many as two thousand fascicles of important texts to the temple on Mt. Hiei; Dōchū also sent his own disciple Enchō to study under Saichō.<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, it is highly possible that Saichō could have seen the Tōshōdaiji Yakushi during his residence in Nara. He may also have heard about the "auspicious Yakushi icon" that was in Ganjin's possession.

### SAICHŌ'S YAKUSHI AND THE DANZŌ TRADITION

Many scholars assert that the plain-wood statues in the former Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall were conceived as auspicious "sandalwood" images (*danzō*).<sup>40</sup> The commissioning and creation of sandalwood icons, and the merits to be gained from such practices, are recorded in many Buddhist texts written across Asia at different moments in time. This tradition was first introduced to Japan in the 730s, through texts such as *Zōitsu agon-kyō* (S: *Ekottarāgama-sūtra*) and *Daijō zōzō kudoku-kyō* (S: *Tathāgata-pratibimba-pratisthanuśamsa-sūtra*).<sup>41</sup> The propitious nature of such icons derives from the very first Buddha image, which, according to

legendary accounts, was made out of pure sandalwood. One version of the legend is recorded in the *Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images* (C: *Zuo fo xingxiang jing*), which was extremely popular in China during the Tang dynasty and would certainly have been known in Japan. This sutra emphasizes the wondrous rewards that may be expected in a future life for the making and commissioning of sandalwood images.<sup>42</sup>

The legendary account of the first sandalwood Buddha image features King Udayana of Vatsa, an avid patron and follower of Śākyamuni. One day, Śākyamuni went up to the Trāyastriṁśa Heaven to preach the Dharma (Buddhist Law, or teachings) to his mother. The king, distraught over Śākyamuni's absence, greatly desired to make an exact likeness of the Buddha. He asked Śākyamuni's disciple Maudgalyāyana to magically transport thirty-two skilled artisans to heaven in order to observe the fine features of the Buddha; the artisans then carved an image of Śākyamuni from a piece of fine sandalwood (*sendan*). When Śākyamuni returned from his heavenly sojourn, this sandalwood image rose to greet him.<sup>43</sup> A very similar story, recorded in *Zōitsu agon-kyō*, notes that the statue was five *shaku* (approximately 152 centimeters) in height.<sup>44</sup>

This first statue, made in the exact likeness of Śākyamuni, subsequently came to be known popularly as the "Udayana Buddha." Copies of this auspicious icon were carried by Buddhist pilgrims along the Silk Road. Such images traveled to the cave-temple site of Kizil in northwestern China, and then in 401, an Udayana icon was brought to the Chinese capital of Chang'an. By the second half of the fifth century, sandalwood Udayana Buddha images had become widespread among the Chinese Buddhist community.<sup>45</sup> In Japan, the tenth-century Shaka image from Seiryōji is an example of an Udayana Buddha icon (fig. 13).<sup>46</sup>

Sandalwood Udayana icons also appear in the accounts of the renowned seventh-century Buddhist pilgrim and scholar Xuanzang (ca. 600–664). In *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (C: *Da Tang xiyu ji*), Xuanzang wrote of the time he reached the Central Asian kingdom of



13 *Sākyamuni*. Zhang Yanjiao and Zhang Yenxi. Ca. 985. Wood, hollow joined-block construction; originally lacquered and polychromed. H. 162.6 cm. Seiryōji, Kyoto.

Kauśambī and encountered a sandalwood Buddha image commissioned by King Udayana. He noted the auspicious quality of the image:

... [the icon] often shows spiritual signs and emits a divine light from time to time. The kings of various countries, relying upon their might, wished to lift it up, but they could not move it, although a large number of people were employed to do so. Then they had pictures of the image produced for worship, and each of them claimed that his picture was true to life.<sup>47</sup>

Xuanzang is credited for popularizing sandalwood imagery in China. Of seven Buddhist icons from India that Xuanzang brought back to China in 645, four were sandalwood images, including a copy of the Udayana Buddha.<sup>48</sup> Ganjin certainly knew about the sandalwood icon tradition, and most scholars today agree that the wood images in the former Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall were conceived as *danzō*.<sup>49</sup>

As real sandalwood is not indigenous to East Asia, it became customary to substitute other types of hard, high-quality wood rather than using imported sandalwood, which was extremely rare and costly. This substitution of other materials for sandalwood is sanctioned in the *Commentary on the Eleven-Headed Kannon* (J: *Jūichimen shinju shingyō gisho*; C: *Yishimian shen zhou xinjing yi shu*), also popular in Japan from the 730s.<sup>50</sup> Although the commentary prescribes using white sandalwood (*byakudan*) for icons of the eleven-headed form of the bodhisattva Kannon, it further explains that when sandalwood is not available, *haku* (C: *bomu*; *Cupressaceae*, or cypress family) may be employed as a substitute.<sup>51</sup>

In Tang China, where sandalwood did not grow, *haku* was indeed substituted in the making of *danzō*.<sup>52</sup> The use of hard, high-quality aromatic wood made for particularly potent and spiritually efficacious images; it also had the practical benefit of purifying the air with its pleasing scent. In early Heian Japan, *haku* came to signify woods such as *hinoki* (Japanese cypress), *kashiwa* (oak), and *kaya*. Recent scholarship has reassessed the types of

wood used for eighth- and ninth-century Buddhist icons, and has shown that *kaya* (rather than *hinoki*) was predominant.<sup>53</sup> More importantly, *kaya* was regarded in Japan as an appropriate substitute for sandalwood in the making of images.<sup>54</sup> This specific medium, therefore, gave these icons great sanctity and religious authority. While we cannot utilize stylistic analysis to compare the Yakushi from the former Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall with Saichō's icon, there is evidence to link the latter to the former in the context of the *danzō* tradition.

The Udayana icon's ontological significance rested on the ideas that it was made from rare, high-quality wood, and that it could be replicated many times over, each "copy" inheriting the likeness of the original (itself a replica of the Buddha Śākyamuni). The legend of this icon, therefore, supports the idea that a "copy" can be as efficacious as the original on which it is modeled; thus such copies express the larger Mahāyāna ideal of multiple realities occupied by myriad Buddhas leading all beings to the one unifying truth of the universe. Furthermore, discussing the nature of the sandalwood Buddha icon, Donald Swearer states that the image is not a mere reminder of the Buddha, but represents his living presence:

When the nonsentient image sees the sentient Fully Enlightened One, it rises to greet him. When the Buddha, in turn, sees the image, he speaks to the statue as though it were a sentient being. The conversation presupposes an act of mutual seeing or recognition. Furthermore, that the image (*paṭimā*) looks like the *tathāgata* transforms the mutual gaze into a mirror-like self-reflexive recognition ... That the image looks like the *tathāgata* seems not to denote a physical resemblance but a mutual, self-reflexive act—the statue sees itself in the Buddha and the Buddha, in turn, recognizes his Buddha-self in the statue. In this way the sandalwood image represents or mirrors the Buddha.

The sandalwood icon thus derives its sacred power from what Swearer calls "the act of mutual recognition," whereby the Buddha recognizes the image as a reflection of himself. The sandalwood icon is,

therefore, a mirror that reflects the reality of the Buddha.<sup>55</sup>

It should be emphasized that the Udayana Buddha icon was already known during Saichō's time, a period marked by what Samuel Morse describes as "the beginning of the practice of conferring high sanctity to unpainted statues carved from aromatic woods throughout East Asia."<sup>56</sup> Given the connection between Saichō's Yakushi icon and the image from the Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall, it bears restating that the Yakushi statue made by Saichō and enshrined at Hieizanji was not simply a Yakushi figure, but was conceived as an auspicious *danzō* icon. This can be gleaned from a passage in *Sanmon dōshaki*: "[Saichō] chopped a tree that had fallen of its own accord in Kokūzōo. [He] used this wood to carve one image of Yakushi with his own hands."<sup>57</sup>

This particular narrative provides us with some clues to understanding the sacred nature of the wood employed to make Saichō's Yakushi, and suggests that the icon was envisioned as a "sandalwood image." First, the account relates that Saichō used a piece of wood from a place called Kokūzōo, which has noteworthy religious connotations. Kokūzōo was a "sacred" valley situated in the Eastern Pagoda area of Enryakuji, just northeast of the Central Hall. The morning star (*myōjō*) purportedly descended to the site when Saichō performed an Esoteric ritual called the *gumonjihō* there.<sup>58</sup> It was also noted as the place where Saichō first established his thatched hut.<sup>59</sup> Second, Saichō used wood from a tree that had fallen by itself, probably from natural causes such as lightning or wind. According to Kuno Takeshi, this is an example of *reiboku shinkō*—a devotion to certain trees or wood as sacred, or a belief that certain trees embody a kind of spiritual force or numen. One such example of the use of *reiboku* (numinous wood) is the Hachiman triad at Tōji in Kyoto, in which all three images are made out of decayed wood.<sup>60</sup>

That Saichō created his Yakushi statue as a *danzō* is also recorded in a conversation between Saichō and Ninchū, one of his disciples. In the ninth-century account *Menju kuketsu* (Oral Transmissions of Personal Instructions), Ninchū asks

his master what kind of numinous wood (*reiboku*) was used for the principal icon of the Ichijō Shikan'in. In response, Saichō explains the miraculous circumstances in which he found the wood for the Yakushi image: in the middle of a forest, a wondrous tree grew with greenish-white leaves and luxuriant branches; it was enveloped by a purple cloud during the day and emitted a pure light at night. To Saichō, it looked like a type of *kashiwa*, but he doubted this and did not know what kind of tree it was. Ninchū then states that the *kashiwa* tree to which Saichō referred was the same species as *haku*.<sup>61</sup> This reference to the Yakushi image as being made from *haku*, a type of wood used in East Asia as a replacement for true sandalwood, places the icon firmly within the *danzō* tradition.

According to the miraculous story of its creation, Saichō's Yakushi was a *danzō*. Ontologically, a *danzō* image constitutes a reference to the original sandalwood Udayana icon by virtue of its material (i.e., sacred wood). Therefore, Saichō's Yakushi belonged to a special class of Buddhist icons, those believed in Asian tradition to be invested with miraculous powers and associated with sacred narratives. Even more importantly, the Udayana Buddha was a standing image, capturing the moment when the statue stood up to greet Śākyamuni in an "act of mutual recognition," to use Swearer's term. Saichō, therefore, made his Yakushi figure a standing icon measuring five *shaku*, five *sun*, to correspond to the Udayana icon's life-size height of five feet. In that sense, on a deeper level, Saichō's standing Yakushi image referred to the standing, sandalwood Udayana Buddha.

Interestingly, the connection between standing Yakushi figures and Udayana statues is found in two written sources of very different types. One is the early-thirteenth-century ritual and iconographical manual *Kakuzenshō*, compiled by the monk Kakuzen of the Shingon school.<sup>62</sup> In the section concerning the Buddha Yakushi, Kakuzen includes a portion titled, "Yakushi Buddha icon from the Jetavana Monastery hospital." According to Kakuzen, three years after Śākyamuni became

enlightened, he built the Jetavana monastery, which housed a life-size, standing Bhaisajyaguru icon that he and his followers had erected. This image had the ability to rid people of all illnesses.<sup>63</sup> The other source is *Nihon ryōiki*, a collection of miraculous stories and Buddhist legends compiled in the early ninth century by the monk Kyōkai of Yakushiji. One of these stories concerns a miraculous wooden image of a standing Yakushi. Kyōkai writes that this Yakushi image, which was revered because of its efficacious healing powers, “was similar to the sandalwood statue made by Udayana.”<sup>64</sup>

These two stories suggest the existence of an iconographical and iconic connection between Yakushi and the Udayana Buddha. In fact, Saichō’s Yakushi icon—its specific height, pose, and material—functioned as a powerful synecdoche not just for the Udayana Buddha, but for Śākyamuni himself. As recorded in *Menju kuketsu*, Saichō even laid out the association between Bhaisajyaguru and Śākyamuni, stating that the Buddhas Shaka, Yakushi, and Amida together formed a trinity; they were Buddhas from different periods of the Buddhist Law.<sup>65</sup>

In these ways, Saichō’s Yakushi figure evoked the memory of the Udayana image, which in turn mirrored the living presence of the Buddha. Or, to borrow Fabio Rambelli’s words, Saichō’s Yakushi icon acted as one example of “alternative bodies (*bunshin*), sort of fractal reproductions of the original sacred entity, in which the totality is identical to its parts or fragments.”<sup>66</sup>

## THE STANDING POSE

What hidden, deeper meaning was encoded in the standing form of Saichō’s Yakushi, beyond its association with the Udayana Buddha? As Robert Gimello states,

Images are repositories of tacit or silent meanings, and as such are inherently more “mysterious,” their meanings somehow “deeper.” The implication ... is that the deeper levels of truths are not accessible in words alone,

that discourse requires imagery for its fulfillment or perfection.<sup>67</sup>

The iconographical significance of a Buddha’s posture (seated versus standing), though rarely discussed, calls for careful consideration. By “iconographic,” I mean the deeper significance that can lie within the artist’s or patron’s intention behind the creation of an object, an underlying idea that may not be immediately apparent.<sup>68</sup>

All visual characteristics of a Buddhist icon have special meanings. In Buddhist iconography, certain attributes of a Buddha image, such as the cranial bump, the webbed hands, and the tuft of hair on the forehead, all contain deeper significance in relating certain superhuman characteristics of the Buddha.<sup>69</sup> The Buddha’s posture, whether standing or seated, is not one of the Thirty-two Major Marks (or Eighty-eight Minor Attributes) of the Buddha, and is therefore more elusive and difficult to decipher. Nevertheless, it can be argued that religious practitioners clearly distinguished between the iconographical meaning of standing and seated Buddha images, and that Saichō was no exception.

The pose of a Buddhist statue indicates a particular state of being, or an action taken by the deity. From a conventional standpoint, seated Buddha images generally represent the Buddha in a classic, yogic posture, in the process of meditation. This seated lotus pose is derived from the many legends that relate the story of how Śākyamuni, shortly after his enlightenment, engaged in intense meditation for several weeks under the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya to contemplate and absorb his newly acquired insight into the nature of the human condition.<sup>70</sup> Other seated Buddha figures make hand gestures indicating that they are preaching to an assembly, or symbolizing their generosity. After attaining enlightenment, Śākyamuni spent the rest of his life wandering and preaching. To illustrate his commitment to disseminating his teachings to anybody who would listen, images of the preaching Śākyamuni are often shown seated, with his right hand forming the *abhaya mudrā* and the left



14 *Sākyamuni Preaching*. 16th century. Hanging scroll; colors and gold on silk panel. 103.4 cm x 48.2 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1904.3.

hand in the *varada mudrā* in front of his abdomen (fig. 14). In other examples, he is seated, “turning the Wheel of the Law” (S: *dharmačakra mudrā*;

J: *tenbōrin-in*) with his hands, thus setting his teachings into motion.

In the context of Mahāyāna Buddhism, seated Buddha images also represent the various Buddhas in their Enjoyment Bodies (S: *saṁbhoga-kāya*), each residing in his Pure Land.<sup>71</sup> Mahāyāna Buddhism teaches that there are multiple Buddhas in addition to the historical Buddha of our world, Śākyamuni; each inhabits a Pure Land where he preaches to a large assembly of humans, heavenly beings, and bodhisattvas. Thus engaged, Buddhas visually represented in their respective Pure Lands are generally shown seated. Various iterations of the Taima Mandala, for example, show a seated Amida in the center, preaching to an assembly of devotees in his Western Pure Land (fig. 15).

By the same token, seated Yakushi images represent the deity in his Pure Land in the East, a place known as the Lapis Lazuli Radiance. The notion of Yakushi residing in his Pure Land is well illustrated in paintings of seated Yakushi figures from ninth-century China (fig. 16). A large number of paintings of Yakushi in his Eastern Pure Land are also found in the Dunhuang caves. In Japan, seated Yakushi statues were much more common than such paintings.

In contrast, the standing Buddha image visually represents a “proactive” deity appearing in this worldly realm to save sentient beings. This notion can be found in the *raigō* (welcoming descent) imagery of the Kamakura period. In *raigō* paintings, the Buddha Amida stands atop a cloud and travels to this world with his entourage to welcome a worthy deceased person back to his Western Pure Land (fig. 17). This “take-charge” attitude, encoded in the standing posture, is most evident in images of bodhisattvas, compassionate beings who remain more engaged with humanity, often leading humans to better realms.<sup>72</sup> Bodhisattvas more often are depicted standing than seated to emphasize their proactive efforts on behalf of suffering beings (fig. 18). The idea of salvation becomes even more pronounced in Buddhist art from the Kamakura period onwards, when deities are often represented standing on double lotus blossoms (one under each



15 *Pure Land of Amida*. 15th century. Hanging scroll; colors and gold on silk panel. 180.2 cm x 163.7 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1906.5.

foot) atop a trailing cloud to indicate movement, more effectively portraying the idea of “swift” deliverance (fig. 18a).<sup>73</sup>

The standing Buddha image also suggests the act of walking—and specifically, walking in meditation. In one episode in the Buddha’s life, following his Enlightenment at Bodhgayā, the Buddha practiced walking meditation for a week on a jeweled path (the *ratna caṇkrama*).<sup>74</sup> Robert Brown suggests that in India, for example, artists almost always used the standing pose to suggest the Bud-

dha walking in meditation, rather than depicting him in motion.<sup>75</sup> According to Nagaoka Ryūsaku, a standing Yakushi statue was a symbol of a Buddha engaged in *gyōdō* (or *kyōgyō*), a Buddhist practice in which the practitioner quietly walks around a certain area, especially to prevent sleep during meditation.<sup>76</sup>

The standing form of Yakushi, which Saichō intentionally chose, had a special meaning and ritual function for his secluded life in the mountains. Walking meditation was a significant part of his

Buddhist practice. Saichō retreated to Mt. Hiei in part to engage in a more rigorous, ascetic form of Buddhist training, consisting of long periods of meditation as well as the study of Buddhist texts.<sup>77</sup> This was not uncommon; at the time, quite a few Buddhist priests (both ordained and unordained) lived in seclusion deep in the mountains.<sup>78</sup>

This solitary training in the deep woods was fueled by the belief that the world was in the midst of a period in which Buddhism was in decline. Often plagued by natural disasters such as earthquakes, smallpox epidemics, devastating droughts, and famines, the late eighth century was viewed as a time of the “degeneration of morals.”<sup>79</sup> According to a widely accepted Buddhist theory, this world would pass through three main phases of the Buddhist Law: the Age of the True Dharma (*shōbō*), the Age of the Semblance Dharma (*zōhō*), and the Age of the Degenerate Dharma (*mappō*).<sup>80</sup> As measured from the death of the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni, the first two periods were each to last a thousand years; *mappō*, the third period, would last ten thousand years.<sup>81</sup> Based on this calculation, the period in which Saichō lived was perceived by many Buddhists as the Age of the Semblance Dharma.<sup>82</sup> Saichō himself discussed at length the eschatological concept of the three Buddhist periods and how they affected human existence.<sup>83</sup>

Saichō’s retreat to Mt. Hiei undoubtedly was motivated by the weight of this dark, unenlightened period. He is said to have stated, “If it is known that it is the time (of the decline of Buddhism), who would not go into the mountains (in order to practice in peace)?”<sup>84</sup> Mountain ascetics, including Saichō, would have performed rites of repentance (*keka*) as part of their self-cultivation. Monks were the “pure practitioners” (*jōgyōsō*) who were regularly asked by the Nara and Heian courts to perform *keka* services for the benefit of the state (as discussed in Chapter One). *Keka* offered specifically to the Buddha Yakushi involved making a series of offerings to an image of the deity with the objective of eliminating not only the practitioner’s own karmic obstructions, but those of others as

well. *Bussetsu shari hotsu keka-kyō*, a sutra about the merits of repentance, also mentions that *keka* should be performed by the Buddhist practitioner before engaging in austerities.<sup>85</sup> Amongst various types of *keka*, Yakushi *keka* rites were known to be effective for removing obstacles that might hinder meditation and obstruct the path to enlightenment.<sup>86</sup> For this reason, performing *keka* in front an image of Yakushi was a popular practice among mountain ascetics.<sup>87</sup>

Yakushi was regarded as the Buddha of the Age of the Semblance Dharma, the thousand-year period in which Saichō lived. The belief in the three Buddhas of the three ages was based on the early Mahāyāna idea of the “Three Bodies of the Buddha,” which consisted of the Dharma Body (S: *Dharma-kāya*), the Enjoyment Body, and the Manifestation Body (S: *Nirmāṇa-kāya*).<sup>88</sup> These “Three Bodies,” according to Saichō, were the same as the One *Tathāgata*, the True Body (*Shinshin*) of the Buddha. The Three Buddha Bodies together, therefore, were conceived as forming the One True Body.<sup>89</sup> In this sense, the Yakushi icon—as both a representation of one of the Three Bodies and a symbol of the unified whole—transcended time and space, simultaneously embodying the idea of a Buddhist cosmological and cosmogonical past as well as the present and future.<sup>90</sup> As Yakushi was the Buddha who manifested during the Age of the Semblance Dharma, it was appropriate for Saichō to enshrine a Yakushi icon rather than a Shaka or an Amida figure in his worship hall.<sup>91</sup>

The perception that the true Dharma was heading towards a complete decline prompted serious monks like Saichō to perform *keka* regularly.<sup>92</sup> The impetus to atone for one’s sins in front of a Yakushi image for the benefit of others can also be seen in a short work called *Ganmon* (Vows) that Saichō wrote soon after he began living on Mt. Hiei.<sup>93</sup> One vow states, “May any merit from my practice in the past, present and future be given not to me, but to all sentient beings so that they may attain supreme enlightenment.”<sup>94</sup> This pledge was manifested in Saichō’s installation of a



16 *Pure Land of Bhaisajyaguru*. China. 9th century.  
Painting, ink and colors on silk. 206 cm x 167 cm.  
The British Museum, London.

Yakushi statue for the purpose of performing Yakushi *keka*.

During the Age of the Semblance Dharma, Saichō's retreat to Mt. Hiei also served as a means for a more dedicated observation of the precepts. At this time, corrupt monks were believed to be contributing to the degeneration of the Buddhist Law by their failure to follow the precepts, and Saichō was committed to reversing this trend.<sup>95</sup> His dedication to this cause is apparent in yet another vow in the *Ganmon*, which states, "So long as I have not kept all of the precepts purely, I will not participate in any lay donor's Buddhist meeting"—a vow that, if not fulfilled, would have prevented him from leaving Mt. Hiei to spread his teachings elsewhere.<sup>96</sup> According to the scriptures, Yakushi protects those who have joined the Buddhist order and followed the precepts from "sinking into woesome paths."<sup>97</sup>

Proper devotion to Yakushi ensures that a worshipper's observation of the precepts would both preserve the purity of body and mind, and assure the fruition of the worshipper's vows.<sup>98</sup> Thus, Saichō's Yakushi image was not only the focal point for his observance of *keka*, but must have been a stalwart visual reminder of the vows he had taken to observe the pure precepts and to work towards the salvation of all sentient beings.

In these ways, the single Yakushi icon enshrined by Saichō made multiple semiotic references to various aspects of the Buddha. Symbolically, the standing Yakushi was a constant reminder for Saichō of his commitment to observe the precepts and to perform his austerities. At the same time, the icon—created as a *danzō*—functioned as a synecdochic reference to the Udayana image and to Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha. Furthermore, to borrow Alexander Griswold's words, "the Buddha's presence was mediated through the chief cult image of the monastery, which in turn is part of a regression extending back not simply to the first image but to the Buddha himself."<sup>99</sup> The Yakushi icon, therefore, not only was an image of Bhaisajyaguru of the Age of the Semblance Dharma, but also simultaneously alluded to Śākyamuni of the Age of the True Dharma and Amitābha of the Age of the Degenerate Dharma; all ultimately represented the Buddha's real essence, his absolute, transcendent, eternal, and inconceivable nature.<sup>100</sup>

## NEW RITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Naturally, an icon's original meaning at the moment of its creation would be transformed over time. This might occur when ownership of the icon is transferred, or when its physical environment (the icon's place of installment, or its ritual and worship space) undergoes changes. Audience reception also has much to do with the changing perception of an icon. As Richard Davis insightfully states, "... even staying in their original locations, the images may take on new roles and new meanings in response to the changing world around



16a Detail of *Pure Land of Bhaisajyaguru*. The British Museum.



17 *Amida raigo* (Welcoming Descent of Amida). 14th–15th century. Hanging scroll; colors and gold on silk. 110.1 cm x 41.8 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC: Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1907.537.

them.”<sup>101</sup> Therefore, we must assume that, as Saichō began to acquire disciples, and as his temple grew in size and importance, his Yakushi icon ceased to be merely a private icon of worship for Saichō, but became an icon for the entire monastic community at Enryakuji—and thus acquired new connotations.

How do certain icons (such as Saichō’s) possess a spiritual aura so potent that they continue to exert great influence over people for generations? Here, James Preston’s idea of “spiritual magnetism,” the power an object or site has to attract devotees, is useful for explaining the long-enduring iconic power of Saichō’s Yakushi. According to Preston, spiritual magnetism (or its degree) is not based on an intrinsic quality of sacredness (which is hard to measure), but rather is derived “from human concepts and values, via historical, geographical, social and other forces that coalesce in a sacred center.” These values do not diminish the attributes of mystery and miracle ascribed to an icon, but in fact make such attributes empirically measurable.<sup>102</sup> In this sense, the spiritual power of Saichō’s Yakushi icon was a direct product of the human concepts and values that also gave new meanings to the sculpture.

Although the standing Yakushi began as a personal icon of devotion for Saichō (especially during the early years of his residence on Mt. Hiei), the icon accumulated additional functions over time. In his early solitude, Saichō practiced self-cultivation through meditation and repentance rites in front of the image; later, however, Saichō and his disciples performed other types of ritual practices before the icon. For example, ceremonies of conferring the bodhisattva precepts and entrance into the Tendai order were held at the Central Hall in front of Saichō’s Yakushi. According to *Genkō shakusho* (1322), a history of Japanese Buddhism, on 806.11.23, Saichō administered the bodhisattva precepts (*bosatsu kai*) to his disciple Enchō and more than a hundred other people in front of the Yakushi image from the Shikan’in.<sup>103</sup> These ceremonies, however, were not yet recognized by the court as official ordination rites.



18 *Jizō bosatsu*. 14th century. Hanging scroll; ink, colors, and gold on silk. 134.9 cm x 40.5 cm. The British Museum, London.

The first official Mahāyāna ordination ceremony in which Tendai disciples received the bodhisattva precepts took place on the fourteenth day of the fourth month of 823.<sup>104</sup> The ceremony once again was held in the Central Hall, where Saichō's Yakushi icon played a key role in

legitimizing the proceedings. To fully understand the significance of this event as a major turning point for the Tendai school (and for the continuing development of Japanese Buddhism), Saichō's endeavors leading up to this ceremony must be reviewed. Between 818 and 822, Saichō submitted several petitions to the court to make his temple a fully independent Mahāyāna school, in contrast to the six official schools housed in the Nara temples, which he deemed Hīnayāna.<sup>105</sup> Independent status meant several things, but most importantly, it would completely free the Tendai order from the control of the Sōgō (Office of Priestly Affairs), thus giving the monastery more autonomy; it thus would differentiate the order from the six main schools of Buddhism in Nara.

In a petition submitted in 819, Saichō envisions a Tendai ordination system using the Mahāyāna bodhisattva precepts, rather than the *shibunritsu* (monastic rules in four divisions)—the Hīnayāna precepts used to ordain monks in China and Japan.<sup>106</sup> In this petition, Saichō highlights the role of the Buddha image in mediating the Buddha's presence in a self-ordination (*jise jukai*), thus changing monastic policy.<sup>107</sup> Saichō asserts that, when a qualified teacher is not available, a candidate can administer the (bodhisattva) precepts to himself by making an oath in front of an image of the Buddha. The *Brahma's Net Sutra*,<sup>108</sup> from which the bodhisattva precepts are taken, instructs that, in a self-ordination, contemplation and repentance should be performed in front of a Buddha image until a sign of the Buddha—his “meritorious appearance” (*kōsō*)—is revealed.<sup>109</sup>

Seeing a vision of the Buddha thus was proof that the Buddha had accepted a disciple's undertaking of the precepts, and had validated the ordination. According to Bernard Faure, in the ceremony of receiving the bodhisattva precepts as it developed in both China and Japan, the taking of vows before “visible” masters (i.e., the ten officiating priests of Indian Buddhism) was no longer necessary. Rather, vows were taken before the “invisible” masters, whose presence was invoked through either visualization or the use of Buddhist icons.<sup>110</sup>



18a Detail of Jizō's feet and double lotus blossoms, *Jizō bosatsu*. The British Museum.

The standing Yakushi image in the Central Hall, therefore, became the true “officiating master” of the Tendai ordination ceremony.

Not only was the icon the “officiating master” (manifesting the great teacher Sākyamuni), but also, due to its location in the Central Hall, the Yakushi image was an official participant in all of the important Tendai ceremonies held at Enryakuji. Jonathan Smith states that an icon “receives its significance from the location it occupies in relation to other things.”<sup>111</sup> The salient position accorded to Saichō’s Yakushi, and the importance of the image to the life of the temple, lend support to this idea. In the fourth month of 823, following the imperial edict approving Saichō’s petitions, his disciples Ennin (794–864) and Gishin participated as teachers in the first official Mahāyāna ordination ceremony. They conferred the Sudden-Perfect bodhisattva

precepts (*Endon bosatsu kai*) on fourteen disciples in front of the Yakushi image in the Central Hall.<sup>112</sup> Additionally, *Denjutsu isshinkaimon* states that, in 834, the annual Tendai candidates for ordination were to be given oral examinations “in front of the Central Hall Yakushi image.”<sup>113</sup> As these accounts indicate, Saichō’s Yakushi was not just one man’s personal icon of devotion and guide to self-cultivation. Rather, with the steady growth and development of his mountain temple and its official recognition as Enryakuji in 823, Saichō’s Yakushi icon became the protector of those who joined the Buddhist order, as well as the key officiant at their ordinations.

Sadly, Saichō was unable to see his labor to found a new religious school in Japan come to fruition, as the great master died in 822, just one year before his vision for an independent Tendai school

was realized. After his death, his Yakushi icon remained enshrined in the Central Hall, becoming a symbol of Enryakuji and its founder.

So significant was this icon that it helped shape the religious identity of the Central Hall, turning this ritual sanctuary into a major center of healing by the tenth century. Although the image eventually was destroyed by fire, it has been reconstructed in this chapter through a contextual analysis using written primary sources. This descriptive resurrection has unveiled the major role that the icon played for Saichō. In particular, the image was a constant visual reminder of his religious training and commitment to his monastic vows; it also functioned as a focal point for his performance of *Yakushi keka*. In time, the Yakushi icon came to serve a larger monastic community, by standing witness to ordination ceremonies and examinations held in the

Central Hall. Most importantly, for Saichō's devoted disciples the icon became a "site of memory,"<sup>114</sup> a part of the communal Tendai legacy of their master and his teachings.

The consequences of reconstructing this icon are invaluable: the recaptured image can now provide a new interpretative framework for analyzing a number of relatively unknown standing figures of Yakushi that have remained largely unexamined. In other words, now it may be possible to illuminate the links between many extant standing Yakushi statues and Saichō's Yakushi icon. Saichō's own statue of a standing Yakushi was clearly of central importance to the master, and in subsequent generations took on a life of its own. Even after the image was destroyed, it continued to have a lasting impact on believers as a potent icon of healing and salvation.



## 4

# Replicating Memory: Extant Images of the Saichō-Enryakuji Lineage

**T**O BORROW FROM BERNARD FAURE, one of the means by which Buddhist icons are animated is through the “transmission” of the efficacy of an established, powerful icon to one or more new icons.<sup>1</sup> This transmission may be effected in many ways; one is through replication. In the history of Japanese Buddhist icons, the Seiryōji Shaka (fig. 13) and the Zenkōji Amida triad are probably the most famous examples of widely replicated images. In both cases, an original icon—“a specific, precisely defined prototype”—serves as the model for the copies, which are reproduced with very little iconographical or stylistic variation.<sup>2</sup>

The previous chapter explored how Saichō personally made (or commissioned) a standing wood Yakushi icon and enshrined it in the Yakushi Hall of his monastery. As Saichō began his life on Mt. Hiei, he gradually began to assemble a small group of disciples, and his modest mountain temple slowly expanded to accommodate the growing monastic community, as we have noted. In 823, a few months after Saichō’s death, Hieizanji was renamed Enryakuji in memory of Emperor Kanmu, who had been a staunch supporter of Saichō; thus the court officially recognized the monastery as the headquarters of the Tendai school.<sup>3</sup> The establishment

of Enryakuji signified radical changes for the monastery’s administrative system and greater independence from the Sōgō, which, in the past, had supervised the affairs of all temples, as well as their nuns and monks.

After Saichō’s death, Tendai ecclesiastics promoted the Central Hall Yakushi image as an auspicious icon of Enryakuji’s heritage. The icon’s direct association with Saichō, particularly with regard to its standing posture and the sacred nature of the wood, invested it with great spiritual authority and provided the rationale for its repeated replication. During Enryakuji’s ascension to power—a phenomenon compounded by the growth of sectarianism—the Tendai school oversaw the replication of Saichō’s Yakushi as a means to assert its own theological and political authority over its rivals (the Shingon school chief among them).<sup>4</sup> To illustrate the school’s effective use of these replicated icons, a small group of Heian-period Yakushi figures that inherited the spiritual legacy of Saichō’s Yakushi image will be considered.

This chapter examines the “replication” of Saichō’s Yakushi, a practice that, in this case, is fundamentally different from similar processes that can be observed for the Seiryōji Shaka and the Zenkōji Amida triad and their many copies. These latter icons have very distinctive physical features—such as unusual *mudrās* or a unique hairstyle—that

*Standing Yakushi.* Daikōji, detail of fig 27.

are faithfully expressed by the copies. Such copies also derive their religious authority through their association with the “miracle narratives” detailing the powers ascribed to the originals. The replication of Saichō’s Yakushi, however, is not so easily discernible. In fact, a wide range of styles is found in the examples that are discussed in this chapter, as these images were made at different times and in different geographical locations throughout the Heian period. These icons were products of their specific locales, images that involved a process of selection on the part of each temple and patron who played a role in their creation.

Despite their varying styles, certain key factors suggest that all of the Yakushi statues examined in this chapter were created to replicate, in one way or another, Saichō’s Yakushi as images imbued with his memory. The most salient visual feature of these copies is the standing pose, which was an extremely rare iconographical feature for Yakushi images in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, as we have seen. This is not to say that all standing Yakushi icons have a direct association with Saichō and Enryakuji. As discussed in the previous chapter, the origins of this plain-wood icon type are to be found at Tōshōdaiji, and examples of the period that take after this plain-wood idiom include the standing Yakushi statues from Keisokuji and Gangōji—images that do not have any connections to Saichō or his temple.<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, the fact that a substantial number of extant standing Yakushi images are linked closely to Enryakuji and Saichō must be noted, and because of these connections, these images were most likely made to replicate the prototype first installed by Saichō in Enryakuji’s Central Hall.

In his study of standing Fudō Myōō (S: Acalanātha) statues of the Tendai lineage from Myōhōin (Kyoto), Itō Shirō has demonstrated that, during the Heian period, the idea of “copying an icon in its likeness” after an established prototype did not necessarily mean that the copies were made as exact, physical replications of the original.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, they were still considered to be successful reproductions, in the sense that they faithfully transmitted the spiritual legacy of the

prototype. In a similar fashion, the spiritual authority of the standing Yakushi images examined in this chapter was legitimated through their direct link to Saichō or his Yakushi icon. Saichō’s Yakushi thus became an established prototype for replication in many standing Yakushi images produced under Tendai supervision.

### DIRECT REPLICATIONS AT ENRYAKUJI’S CENTRAL HALL

The tradition of replicating Saichō’s Yakushi icon first began at the Central Hall. According to *Eigaku yōki*, a Yakushi statue for this hall was pledged by Ōtomo Sukune no Kunimichi (768–828), Enryakuji’s first lay administrator (*zoku bettō*).<sup>7</sup> The account also relates that An’e (794–868), who became the fourth abbot of Enryakuji in 864, carved the image out of numinous wood in about two months’ time.<sup>8</sup> The compiler of *Eigaku yōki* also notes that this Yakushi statue was five *shaku* in height, and that its body was covered in gold, with multicolored roundels on its garments. Art historians have focused more on An’e’s role in the actual creation of this icon than on Ōtomo no Kunimichi, stating that the statue was probably made during An’e’s years as abbot (864–868).<sup>9</sup>

Inasmuch as *Eigaku yōki* states that the person who vowed to have the image made (*honganshu*) was Kunimichi, he evidently played a central role in overseeing the creation of this icon, while An’e’s responsibility was to undertake the carving of the statue using sacred wood. As Kunimichi died in 828 and An’e did not become abbot of Enryakuji until 864, it is unlikely that An’e made the Yakushi during his abbottship in the latter half of the ninth century. Furthermore, given Kunimichi’s appointment as lay administrator for Enryakuji in 823, the creation of the image during his tenure of this post is more plausible. As noted previously, Saichō died before the petitions he had submitted to the court regarding Enryakuji’s status were approved. When these petitions were granted a week after Saichō’s death, Ōtomo no Kunimichi was selected as one of

the two lay administrators for Enryakuji, officials who would act as liaisons between the emperor and the temple.<sup>10</sup> As Paul Groner states,

The lay administrators were to be in charge of the Tendai School's relations with the government. Thus they oversaw the testing of the yearly ordinand candidates and the issuance of ordination certificates. They also shepherded the Tendai School's proposals through court channels, assisted the school financially, and occasionally intervened to help settle disputes. Their high positions at court made them invaluable allies for the struggling Tendai School, since they served as influential advocates of the Tendai position in the governmental proceedings.<sup>11</sup>

One of Kunimichi's first responsibilities as lay administrator was to test the annual candidates for ordination. This formal examination took place in the Central Hall, and the results were reported back to the Council of State (Dajōkan). As we have noted, on 823.4.14, Saichō's disciples performed the first official Mahāyāna ordination ceremony in the Central Hall (in front of Saichō's Yakushi icon). On this day, fourteen monks were fully ordained, and Saichō's successor, Gishin, presided over the ceremony as the "transmitter of the precepts" (*denkai-shi*). Because the examinations of the yearly candidates and the full Mahāyāna ordination ceremonies were conducted in the Central Hall, where Saichō's Yakushi was enshrined, Kunimichi may have had a Yakushi statue made in the likeness of Saichō's icon as a way to pay homage to Enryakuji's founder, and to commemorate both his own appointment as lay administrator and his official role as examiner of the Tendai candidates.

As stated above, An'e's role was in the actual carving of this Yakushi statue. *Eigaku yōki* notes that he used numinous wood (*reiboku*) and carved the image in one lunar month and forty days. During the process, he prayed to the Buddhas, the *kami*, and the Three Jewels (of Buddhism), and donned new purifying robes (*jōe*).<sup>12</sup> Whether or not An'e really carved the statue himself is not the issue here. More noteworthy is the fact that the compiler of

*Eigaku yōki* wanted to relate that this Yakushi was a standing, five-shaku statue, and that its process of creation was similar to that of Saichō's icon: a Buddhist priest took spiritually efficacious wood and carved a Yakushi image, just as Saichō had done in the past. In other words, not only was the final product similar to the original, but the way in which it came to be was similar as well.

While the Yakushi image was being fashioned during Kunimichi's tenure as lay administrator (between 823 and 824), An'e was still a young monk in his late twenties.<sup>13</sup> He was also (and had been) a student of Saichō's successor Gishin, rather than of Saichō himself. Gishin was officially appointed the head abbot (*zasu*) of Enryakuji in 823; as his talented student, An'e was probably chosen by Gishin to carry out Kunimichi's commission (either by carving the image himself or by overseeing its production by a local sculptor).

It bears repeating that, according to *Eigaku yōki*, Kunimichi's Yakushi statue was covered with gold and ornamented with decorative patterns on its monastic robes. The adornment of this icon with gold and colors was in direct imitation of Saichō's Yakushi figure. As mentioned previously, Saichō's Yakushi icon originally was a plain-wood image, to which Gishin then added gold and polychrome decoration, in accordance with Saichō's last wishes.<sup>14</sup> *Keiran shūyōshū*, a fourteenth-century Tendai encyclopedic source compiled by the Enryakuji monk Kōshū (fl. 1311–1347), describes the decoration of Saichō's Yakushi in more detail: the outer robe was painted red, with its underside painted greenish-blue; this outer robe was also adorned with circular lotus patterns made of *kirikane* (cut gold foil).<sup>15</sup>

Images are not ornamented with bright colors and gold merely to achieve a visually pleasing effect; rather, the practice derives from the Buddhist concept of *shōgon* (S: *alaṅkāra*; C: *zhuangyan*), an act of devotion that celebrates and marks the divine. The Chinese characters used for the term can be interpreted to mean "sanctification through a wealth of splendor," and the practice allows Buddhist icons to be not only embodiments of sacred ideas, but also "manifestations of the Buddhist

faith's essence in its utmost spiritual adornment.”<sup>16</sup> The use of gold for ornamenting Buddhist images has always been one of the highest expressions of this sublime adornment. According to Helmut Brinker, gold ornamentation traditionally has carried three levels of meaning. The first is an allusion to the material quality of gold as a precious, shiny metal. The second is the ontological notion of the Buddha's noble body as golden, pure, and immaculate.<sup>17</sup> Third, the various adornments (including colors, gold, jewelry, halos, and other attributes) serve the religious function of relating sensual beauty to the beholder, a beauty that ultimately embodies abstract notions of purity, immaculate brightness, and radiant awakening.<sup>18</sup>

Buddhist icons commonly were ornamented with gold in Central Asia and China during the Tang period.<sup>19</sup> Matsuura Masaaki notes that the religious practice of adorning auspicious icons (J: *zuizō*; C: *ruixiang*) is recorded in written works such as the sixth-century *Record of the Monasteries of Luoyang* (C: *Luoyang qielan ji*; J: *Rakuyō garanki*) and the aforementioned *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, with which Saichō would have been familiar. For example, in fascicle twelve of the latter, Xuanzang writes of his visit to the city of Bhīmā, where he saw a standing sandalwood image of the Buddha that emitted light from time to time. The locals believed that King Udayana of Vatsa commissioned this image while Śākyamuni was still alive. After the Buddha's death, the icon flew to the northern part of the country (Gostana, where Bhīmā is located) and was worshipped by the local population. Sick and diseased people covered the image with gold in the areas of the body that corresponded to their own ailments, and prayed for good health and recovery from illness.<sup>20</sup>

According to the aforementioned record in *Keiran shūyōshū*, the outer robe of Saichō's Yakushi icon was painted red, with blue-green coloration on the inside. This particular color combination can be seen on the auspicious Buddha icons painted on the walls of the Dunhuang caves in northwestern China.<sup>21</sup> A mural painting in Cave 231 (west wall

niche) illustrates a standing sandalwood Buddha accompanied by a caption that reads, “Auspicious image from the walled city of Bhīmā.”<sup>22</sup> In this painting, the Buddha wears a red outer robe and a blue-green inner robe (*sōgishi*) and skirt (*kun*). Images of Buddhas wearing robes in this color scheme are found quite commonly in the murals at Dunhuang.<sup>23</sup>

Aside from the polychroming, Saichō's Yakushi was said to have a circular lotus pattern applied in cut gold on the outer robe. Matsuura states that this particular decorative pattern also comes from Tang China.<sup>24</sup> As for extant examples, remnants of cut-gold ornamentation (including circular lotus patterns) are found on the outer robe of the famous Seiryōji Shaka (fig. 13).<sup>25</sup> Although the cut-gold ornamentation on this image is faded and barely discernible, the Shaka statue at Saidaiji in Nara, which is a copy of the Seiryōji icon, exhibits well-preserved circular lotus patterns in *kirikane* on its outer robe (fig. 19), giving us some idea of the likely appearance of the ornamentation on Saichō's Yakushi icon. Although the Seiryōji Shaka is dated to the late tenth century, elaborate *kirikane* ornamentation—specifically of circular lotus patterns—was already being utilized by the Enryakuji priests for Yakushi icons in the Central Hall during the ninth century.<sup>26</sup>

As noted previously, the Yakushi image that Saichō made was originally unpainted and undecorated. It appears that Saichō and Gishin learned about the practice of adorning Buddhist icons during their sojourn in China (803–805), especially while visiting a famous temple known as Kaiyuansi in Taizhou. Nearly two centuries later, in 985, the Tōdaiji monk Chōnen (938–1016) commissioned two Chinese sculptors to produce a copy of an Udayana Buddha icon that he had seen in the Tang capital of Chang'an. The actual making of the Udayana replica took place at a temple called Kaiyuansi. Interestingly, according to Matsuura, this Kaiyuansi in Taizhou was the very same temple that Saichō and Gishin had visited to receive the Tiantai teachings, and so it is possible that they learned about the religious practice of adorning auspicious



19 *Shaka* (detail). Zenkei and assistants. 1249. Wood, hollow joined-block construction, with cut-gold decoration (*kirikane*). H. 167 cm. Saidaiji, Nara.

icons there (assuming that this practice already existed at the temple in the early ninth century).<sup>27</sup> This sheds some light on the possible reasons why Saichō instructed Gishin in his will to have his plain-wood Yakushi icon decorated with colors and gold, a process that An'e—at the behest of Ōtomo no Kunimichi—repeated in his replication of the image. This particular type of ornamentation is found on quite a few standing Yakushi images from the Heian period, and is one distinguishing feature that allows us to identify Yakushi icons of the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage.

An additional ninth-century Yakushi icon was enshrined in the Central Hall alongside Saichō's Yakushi and the image commissioned by Ōtomo no Kunimichi. According to *Eigaku yōki*, the sixth abbot of Enryakuji, Yuishū (825–893; abbotship 892–893), commissioned a standing Yakushi statue in 859.<sup>28</sup> In language similar to that used to describe the creation of Saichō's Yakushi icon, the compiler of *Eigaku yōki* notes that Yuishū “carved a standing, wood Yakushi with his own hands,” most likely to make reference to the genesis of the earlier image. Yuishū's icon also closely matched Saichō's statue in height, measuring exactly five *shaku*, three *sun* (161.5 centimeters), and likewise was ornamented with polychrome and gold applied to its body and robes.

### SAICHŌ'S YAKUSHI AS A SECRET IMAGE

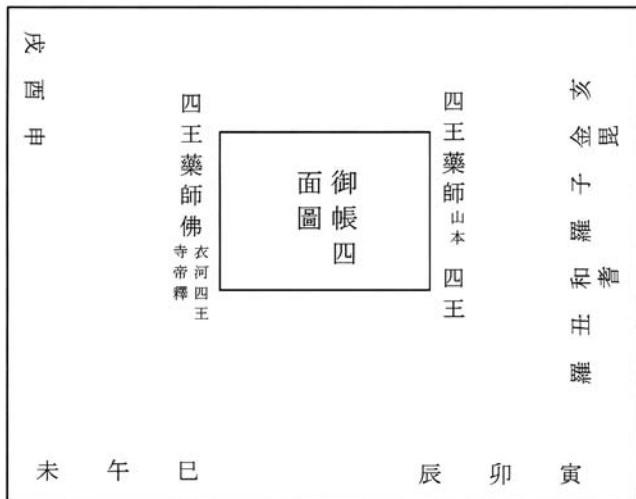
Sometime during the Heian period, Saichō's Yakushi was made into a *hibutsu*, a secret, hidden icon, tucked away in the inner sanctuary (*naijin*) of the Central Hall.<sup>29</sup> As noted earlier, the ninth-century document *Denjutsu issinkaimon* mentions that examinations for annual ordinands were held in front of the Yakushi image, suggesting that, at least during Saichō's time, the Yakushi icon was not yet hidden from public view. It was most likely isolated after Saichō's death, and as Sherry Fowler states, this must have enhanced “the mystery surrounding the image, thereby increasing its power.”<sup>30</sup>

No plans from the early ninth century that depict how the Yakushi image was enshrined in the Central Hall survive, but the thirteenth-century iconographical and ritual compendium *Asabashō* provides us with a diagram from the late Heian period of all of the Buddhist icons arranged in the inner sanctuary (fig. 20).<sup>31</sup> This diagram shows a rectangular room with a smaller enclosure marked off by curtains. Placed outside the enclosure on the north and south sides are the Four Guardian Kings (two on each side) and two Yakushi images (one on each side). The caption for the diagram mentions the name of the priest Keimyō (965–1038), as well as a set of Twelve Divine Generals that was commissioned for the Central Hall in 1021 by the eminent courtier Fujiwara no Michinaga (966–1027).<sup>32</sup> Mōri Hisashi contends that the arrangement of the Central Hall icons in the *Asabashō* diagram corresponds to that seen in the period just after the completed Twelve Divine Generals were dedicated in 1022, and before 1038, the year of Keimyō's death. Furthermore, images of the bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō are not noted in *Asabashō*, although a pair was dedicated to the Central Hall by Michinaga's son, the regent Fujiwara no Yorimichi (992–1074), in 1052.<sup>33</sup> This further suggests that the diagram in *Asabashō* depicts the arrangement of the Central Hall icons prior to 1052. Thus, assuming that the two Yakushi images placed outside the enclosure correspond to those created by An'e (for Kunimichi) and Yuishū, we can conclude that, at least in the first half of the eleventh century, Saichō's Yakushi was already concealed behind closed curtains.

A plan of the Central Hall in *Kuin bukkakushō* (fig. 21) shows that Saichō's Yakushi (indicated by the characters 木佛, “wood Buddha”) was enshrined in the inner sanctuary of the hall during the tenure of Jien (1155–1225) as Tendai abbot.<sup>34</sup> Saichō's Yakushi icon and a set of Seven Medicine Buddhas are enclosed within curtains; next to the diagram is a note stating that Jichin (as Jien was known posthumously) had arranged the Yakushi images in this manner. Yakushi's attendant bodhisattvas, Nikkō and Gakkō, are placed directly

中堂圖

西

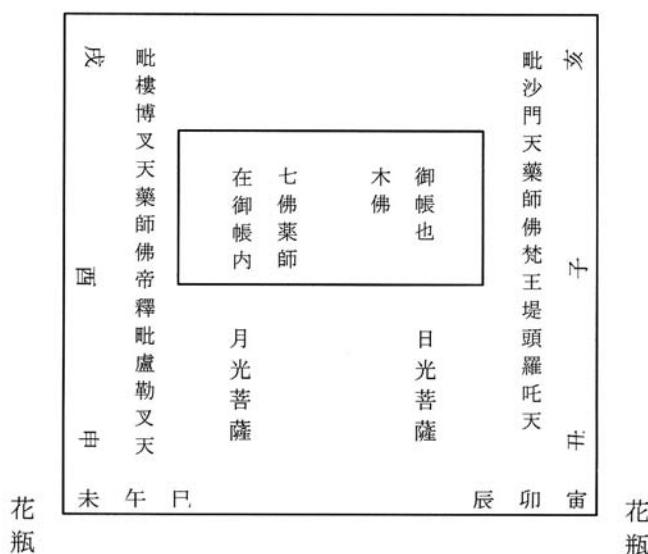


20 Plan of the Central Hall of Enryakuji. Diagram by the author after *Asabashō*, 13th century.

中堂壇上是前様。是ハ慈鎮和尚立在  
サセ給テ候也。

西

佛後壁也



21 Plan of the Central Hall of Enryakuji. Diagram by the author after *Kuin bukkakushō*, late 14th century.

outside the curtains on the east side, while the two other standing Yakushi, the Four Guardian Kings, and the guardian deities Bonten and Taishakuten are placed on the north and south sides.

### THE MYSTERY OF THE MUDRĀS

After Saichō's Yakushi image was hidden from public view, subsequent copies of the icon were subject to variation, particularly when it came to replicating the *mudrās*. As we have noted, Yakushi images are typically shown with two main *mudrā* combinations.<sup>35</sup> Images from the Nara period and earlier form *mudrās* similar to those made by Shaka figures, which consist of the right hand raised in the *abhaya mudrā* and the left hand forming the *varada mudrā*. The gestures made by the seated Yakushi image at Hōrinji in Nara comprise a good example of this *abhaya-varada mudrā* combination, characteristic of seventh-century Yakushi figures (fig. 3).

From the ninth century onward, Yakushi images commonly came to hold medicine jars in their left hands.<sup>36</sup> The exact nature of the *mudrās* made by Saichō's Yakushi is unknown, and written records contain contradictory information. According to *Asabashō*, Saichō's icon displayed the *abhaya mudrā* with the right hand and the *varada* with the left, and did not hold a medicine jar.<sup>37</sup> The Tendai monk Kōshū (author of *Keiran shūyōshū*), however, writes that, although the *abhaya-varada mudrā* combination was, in fact, found on the two other Yakushi statues in the Central Hall (those commissioned by Kunimichi and Yuishū), it was not seen on Saichō's image. As Kōshū states, “people mistook them [the *mudrās* of the other images] as belonging to Saichō's Yakushi, which was not viewable.”<sup>38</sup>

Kōshū goes on to state that the *mudrā* formed by Saichō's Yakushi was the *chikichijō-in* (the “felicity of knowledge” gesture), which is rare. According to the Buddhist iconographical dictionary *Butsuzō insō daijiten*, when making this *mudrā*, the right hand is held out with the tips of the thumb and ring

finger (or middle finger) touching, and the remaining fingers extended. The left hand either grasps part of the robe (if the image is standing) or rests in the lap with the palm up.<sup>39</sup> Because the *chikichijō-in* is similar to Amida's preaching *mudrā* known as *seppō-in* (“exposition of the Law”), Kōshū explains that the former resembles a variant of the latter, called the *hōjin seppō-in* (“exposition of the Law by the Reward Body”).<sup>40</sup>

Yakushi images displaying the *chikichijō-in* gesture in Japan are extremely rare. Among extant examples is a seated, Kamakura-period Yakushi statue at Kyoto's Shōjiji (not to be mistaken for the smaller, ninth-century seated Yakushi also owned by the temple) with a *mudrā* combination that appears to fit the description of *chikichijō-in* (fig. 22). The right hand is held in front of the chest, palm facing down, with the thumb and middle finger



22 Seated Yakushi. Late 12th–early 14th century. Wood, joined-block construction, with lacquer and gold leaf. H. 85.1 cm. Shōjiji, Kyoto.

touching lightly; the left hand forms the same gesture in front of the abdomen, but with the palm facing upward. A medicine jar, most likely added at a later time, rests awkwardly on the left palm.<sup>41</sup> Another example is a life-size, standing wood Yakushi statue enshrined in the Golden Hall of Muroji in Nara Prefecture (fig. 23). Mōri Hisashi suggests that this figure's right hand forms a kind of *chikichijō-in*, with the right thumb touching the middle finger;<sup>42</sup> it must be noted, however, that both hands are later restorations. The ninth-century Yakushi from Ei-konji in Hyōgo Prefecture seems to display another variation of *chikichijō-in* or *hōjin seppō-in*.<sup>43</sup> In this image, the right hand is raised to shoulder level, with the thumb and middle finger joined to form a circle. The left hand is held in front of the chest; it

holds a wish-granting jewel (S: *cintāmaṇi*) in its palm, although the jewel was probably added at a later date.

*Shijō hiketsu* (Secret Teachings in Four Chapters), a compilation of Tendai documents by the aforementioned prelate Jien, also contains information on the *mudrās* displayed by Saichō's icon. Jien writes that the thumb and middle finger of the image's right hand were joined, with the remaining fingers extended. The left arm was held very close to the body, and the left palm faced upward, with all fingers bent slightly. Tsuda Tetsuei, who examined *Shijō hiketsu*, observes that Jien must have found this *mudrā* combination to be unusual for a Yakushi image, as he deemed it worth noting.<sup>44</sup> Tsuda also calls the combination a rare variant of the *abhaya-varada mudrā*.<sup>45</sup> A diagram of this variant form appears in *Kakuzenshō*, and it closely matches Jien's description (fig. 24).<sup>46</sup> In this diagram, the right hand of the Yakushi figure is raised with palm outward as in *semui-in* (*abhaya mudrā*), but instead of having all fingers outstretched, the right thumb and index finger touch to form a circle, while the other three fingers remain slightly bent. The left arm is bent at a ninety-degree angle and remains close to the body; the palm faces upward, and with the exception of the index finger, the three other fingers curl naturally. As noted above, the smaller of the two Yakushi statues from Murōji (fig. 23) displays *mudrās* that closely resemble those in the *Kakuzenshō* diagram. Saichō's Yakushi icon, then, apparently resembled the Murōji Yakushi with regard to its hand gestures, which were seen as *chikichijō-in* or a variant of the *abhaya-varada mudrā*. And as the passage in Kōshū's *Keiran shūyōshū* reminds us, by the Kamakura period the appearance of the image was already subject to debate.

#### EXTANT REPLICATIONS BEYOND ENRYAKUJI

Saichō's standing Yakushi icon, replete with the memory of the master and his teachings,



23 Standing Yakushi. 10th century. Wood, single-block construction. H. 164 cm. Murōji, Nara Prefecture.



24 Standing Yakushi with Attendant Bodhisattvas from *Kakuzenshō*. Early 13th century.

eventually became a secret Buddha image and was hidden from public view. Significantly, the two other Yakushi icons installed in the Central Hall were also crafted of numinous wood in the standing pose. This iconic form of the standing Yakushi thus came to symbolize the cult of the Medicine Buddha at Enryakuji. Unfortunately, all three Yakushi statues in the Central Hall were destroyed in the great fires of 1435 and 1571; but a small corpus of extant standing Yakushi images, examined in this section, demonstrates how Enryakuji monopolized this icon type and endorsed the replication of Saichō's Yakushi icon during the Heian period.

### Kan'eiji Yakushi

The principal icon of Kan'eiji in Tokyo is a standing Yakushi that faithfully transmits the hallmarks of the Saichō-Enryakuji type. The temple was established in 1625 by order of the Tokugawa family, Japan's military rulers during the Edo period (1615–1868), who sought to establish a Tendai center that equaled the great Enryakuji in the Kantō region of their headquarters.<sup>47</sup> Just as Enryakuji took its name from the Enryaku era (782–806), during which Saichō's most avid patron, Emperor Kanmu, reigned, Kan'eiji—officially known as Tōeizan Kan'eiji, or “The Eastern Mt. Hiei, Kan'eiji”—was named after the Kan'ei era (1624–1643). Kan'eiji thrived under the patronage of the Tokugawa as their family temple (*bodaiji*), guided by Nankōbō Tenkai (1536–1643), a Tendai priest who acted as religious advisor to the first three Tokugawa shoguns.<sup>48</sup> In 1698, by order of the fifth Tokugawa shogun, Tsunayoshi (1646–1709), a grand Central Hall (Konpon Chūdō) was constructed to imitate Enryakuji's. Going one step further, however, Kan'eiji's Central Hall was constructed as an elaborate building that completely eclipsed its counterpart at Enryakuji in size and scale.<sup>49</sup>

Naturally, to legitimize Kan'eiji as the new Tendai headquarters in Edo (present-day Tokyo), it was necessary for the principal icon of the newly consecrated Central Hall to be an accurate transmitter of the Saichō-Enryakuji image type. Rather than creating a replica of the prototype at Enryakuji, an already existing Yakushi statue was transferred to Kan'eiji from another Tendai temple, Sekishinji, in Shiga Prefecture.<sup>50</sup> Although this Yakushi icon was openly displayed during the Edo period, it is currently a secret image, very rarely placed on public view. Today, a slightly smaller replica (*omaedachi*) is installed in front of the hidden icon as a stand-in (fig. 25).<sup>51</sup>

The Sekishinji icon that Kan'eiji appropriated for its own faithfully epitomizes the legacy of Saichō's Yakushi image. Like many *danzō* icons in Japan, this Yakushi icon is made of *kaya* in the single-block technique, and measures 142.4 centimeters in height.<sup>52</sup> At first glance, this height seems to



25 *Standing Yakushi*. Date unknown. Gilt wood. H. 110 cm (including mandorla). Kan'eiji, Tokyo.

deviate from Saichō's prototype and the two other Central Hall images, which were at least five *shaku* (or 152 centimeters) tall; but an exact replication of every physical and iconographical attribute was not a strict requirement for icons made in the spiritual likeness of an original. This notion—that the replication of an image did not necessarily require

matching every single tangible detail to that of the prototype—is apparent, for example, in the numerous copies of the Seiryōji Shaka icon.<sup>53</sup>

In fact, the Kan'eiji Yakushi is not even a “replication” in the true sense, because the founding legend of Sekishinji states that both the temple and its principal icon were established by Saichō. As the icon is dated to the tenth century (based on stylistic analysis) and Saichō died in the early ninth century, this is obviously an embellishment that was intended to legitimize Sekishinji's religious authority as a Tendai temple upon its founding. Worth noting, however, is the fact that Kan'eiji sought out a Yakushi icon that was similar to the original enshrined at Enryakuji. In other words, Kan'eiji's icon needed to be of a pedigree that could be linked back to Saichō himself, for only then could Kan'eiji be on a par with Enryakuji.

### Komatsuji Yakushi

The Komatsuji standing Yakushi is yet another icon that replicates Saichō's Yakushi figure. Like the Kan'eiji image, this Yakushi is also a secret icon, stored away and protected inside its own *zushi* (lacquered shrine) on the main altar of the temple (fig. 26). As Komatsuji is located in a densely forested area of Chikakuramachi, Chiba Prefecture, the secret image is not well known; only recently was the Yakushi icon examined and photographed by the art historian Konno Toshifumi.

The image, which stands 147.3 centimeters tall, is made of *kaya* and constructed from a single block of wood, without a central cavity. It demonstrates stylistic characteristics found on many early-Heian standing Yakushi statues, such as the pattern of the drapery, which hangs in the form of a “Y” over the pelvic area and forms ovoid shapes around the lower legs. The Yakushi figure wears an outer robe and a monastic undershirt (*henzan*) that covers the right shoulder and the right side of the chest, a feature also seen on the Murōji Yakushi and the Yakushi at Tadadera in Fukui Prefecture, both dated to the second half of the ninth or the early tenth century. The skirt is long, and its hem undulates in a wave-like pattern over the feet.



26 *Standing Yakushi*. Late 9th century. Wood, single-block construction; originally painted. H. 147.3 cm. Komatsuji, Chiba Prefecture.



27 *Standing Yakushi*. 12th century. Wood, joined-block construction; originally polychromed. H. 160.1 cm. Daikōji, Iwate Prefecture.

As for the figure's face, Konno notes that it carries a stern, unyielding expression accentuated by eyes with sharply pointed corners, "like the beak of a bird." The nostrils are prominent and the upper lip protrudes slightly forward, adding to the severity of the countenance.<sup>54</sup>

Several features of this Yakushi icon suggest that it was made in the likeness of the Enryakuji Central Hall images. The icon's height is roughly equivalent to five *shaku* (four *shaku*, eight *sun*, to be exact), and is similar to the height of the Central Hall Yakushi commissioned by Ōtomo no Kuni-michi. The right hand forms the *abhaya mudrā*, while the left arm is bent at a nearly ninety-degree angle, palm facing up and holding a medicine jar. Konno notes that both of the wrists and hands are later replacements, and that originally, the left hand may not have held a medicine jar, more in keeping with Saichō's Yakushi icon. Another significant feature that ties this image to the Saichō-Enryakuji tradition is the red pigment (traces of which remain) applied over a layer of white on the statue's outer robe, which indicates that, at the time of its creation, this Yakushi figure donned a red outer robe. Furthermore, rough chisel marks may be found on various areas of the icon's surface. It appears that these marks were left on the icon consciously and deliberately to emphasize the numinous nature of the wood employed to create the image.<sup>55</sup>

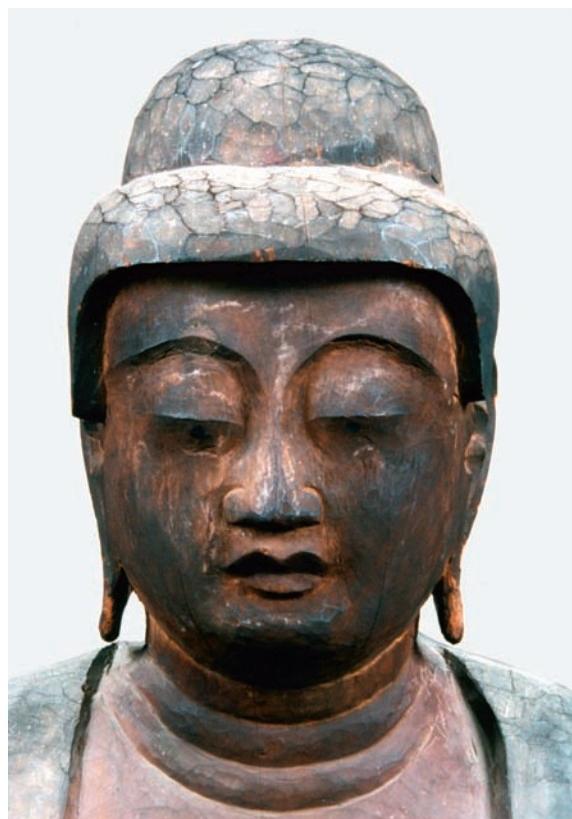
Even more significantly, Komatsuji's history reveals the icon's association with Saichō. The acclaimed mountain ascetic En no Gyōja purportedly established the temple in 718.<sup>56</sup> Komatsuji subsequently fell into decline, but was revived in 831 by the Enryakuji monk (and future abbot) Ennin, which explains how the temple came under Enryakuji's control at that time.<sup>57</sup> The temple's association with Ennin and Enryakuji, in addition to the icon's standing posture, five-*shaku* height, and red monastic robe, all indicate that the Yakushi figure was made to emulate Saichō's Yakushi icon.

### **Daikōji Yakushi**

The standing Yakushi statue at the Tendai temple Daikōji in Iwate Prefecture is another icon that

emulates images in the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage (fig. 27).<sup>58</sup> This image, dated to the twelfth century, stands 160.1 centimeters in height, or five *shaku*, three *sun*—the same height as the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi commissioned by Yuishū in 859. The image's right hand is raised in the "fear-not" *mudrā*, and the left palm is turned out in the wish-granting gesture. As is common with Heian-period Yakushi images, the Daikōji image holds a medicine jar in its left palm, but based on the awkward positioning of this implement in the hand, Tsuda Tetsuei speculates that the icon may not have held a jar originally.

What is most notable about this statue is the traces of rough chisel marks, called *natabori*, which have been left on parts of the image, particularly around the U-shaped collar and the *usnīṣa* (fig. 27a). *Natabori* is a carving technique often found on Buddhist sculpture of the Heian period in which



27a Detail of face, *Standing Yakushi*. Daikōji.

numerous rough marks from a round chisel are left on the surface of a statue.<sup>59</sup> At first glance, the image may appear to be an unfinished piece. But such markings are found on images of the highest quality, such as the Jingoji Yakushi (fig. 33a), suggesting that these *natabori* were executed deliberately. Tsuda Tetsuei, who published a report on this image, believes that these chisel marks were purposefully left on the Daikōji Yakushi to highlight the sacred character of the wood, and to effectively link the icon to Saichō's supposedly hand-carved Yakushi *danzō*.<sup>60</sup> Although it is unlikely that Saichō's Yakushi was a *natabori*, the rough hatchet markings made on the Daikōji icon suggest the amateur hands that carved the image, emulating the Enryakuji Central Hall icon created by "Saichō's own hands."

Another feature linking the Daikōji Yakushi image to those in the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage is the specific manner in which its monastic garments are colored and decorated. Tsuda's study of the image has revealed that the robe, now suffering from extensive discoloration, was once polychromed in bright colors, in a manner similar to Saichō's Yakushi icon (after its adornment by Gishin). The hem of the outer robe reveals traces of arabesque patterns (*karakusa mon*) in either ink or a mineral dye. Furthermore, dark blue pigment was once used around the U-shaped drapery folds over the abdominal area, suggesting that the underside of the outer robe was meant to be dark blue. Circular floral patterns (*danka mon*) can be found adorning the inner robe.<sup>61</sup> Finally, the hem of the figure's skirt was once painted with reddish-orange pigment. These traits demonstrate that the adornment of the Daikōji Yakushi figure closely imitates the iconic tradition of the three standing Yakushi images enshrined in the Central Hall of Enryakuji, placing the icon squarely within the Saichō-Enryakuji tradition.<sup>62</sup>

### Dairenji Yakushi

The temple Dairenji, in Kyoto, houses a standing Yakushi statue that also replicates Saichō's Yakushi icon (fig. 28). The Dairenji Yakushi belonged to a



28 Standing Yakushi. Late 11th century. Wood, split-and-joined construction; originally lacquered and polychromed. H. 192.4 cm. Dairenji, Kyoto.

group of Buddhist images in the Main Hall of the temple, once part of the Gion shrine-temple complex (present-day Yasaka Shrine).<sup>63</sup> Although at first the Gion complex—known at the time as both Gion Shrine and Kankeiji—was under the control of the great Nara temple Kōfukuji, in 974 Gion Shrine broke away from Kōfukuji and became a sub-temple of Enryakuji. While the exact origins of the Gion shrine-temple complex are debatable, Neil McMullin states that the general scholarly consensus is that a Buddhist priest by the name of Ennyo of Jōjūji founded the temple Kankeiji and enshrined a Yakushi statue as its principal icon of worship in the year 876.<sup>64</sup>

In 1070, a fire destroyed many of the buildings at Gion, including Kankeiji and the Buddhist icons enshrined there. Many of these halls were rebuilt in the following year. Itō Shirō believes that the extant Yakushi image at Dairenji was made to replace the original principal icon lost in the fire. Furthermore, his study shows that, based on stylistic analysis, the image likely was made either by an eleventh-century sculptor known as Kakujo (d. 1077), or by a sculptor of his lineage.<sup>65</sup>

Although we do not know if the original Yakushi icon enshrined by Ennyo was a standing image, the Yakushi figure made after the 1070 fire—modeled after the Enryakuji Central Hall images—certainly is. This is not surprising, given Enryakuji's absorption of and subsequent control over the complex after 974. The Yakushi statue is slightly larger than life-size, standing 192.4 centimeters (six *shaku*, three *sun*, four *bun*) in height, and is made of Japanese cypress using the split-and-joined method with a central cavity. Like the three Central Hall Yakushi icons, the garments of the Dairenji Yakushi were once elaborately adorned with polychrome. Today much of this coloration has worn off, but traces of white pigment remain on the wood, over which a lacquer coating was applied. Furthermore, in keeping with the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi tradition, hints of red pigment can still be found on the outer robe, and traces of greenish-white pigment on the underside of the left sleeve; these remnants suggest that the

Yakushi once wore a red robe with a white underside. The skin of the figure was finished off with a coat of lacquer.<sup>66</sup>

Further associations between the image and Saichō's Yakushi icon can be found in *Kankeiji kanjinchō*, an Edo-period record of Kankeiji's alms-collecting activities kept at Dairenji. Details from this record clearly reveal that the Dairenji Yakushi image was seen as a faithful replication of Saichō's icon. As the record states, "It is said that this temple's principal deity was made from the sacred wood (*misogi*) of the Central Hall's spiritual icon."<sup>67</sup>

The main difference between the Dairenji Yakushi image and the three Enryakuji Central Hall icons is height. The Dairenji image is considered to be of *shū hanjōroku* size, which roughly corresponds to 182 centimeters, considerably taller than the Central Hall Yakushi icons (which ranged from 151 to 167 centimeters).<sup>68</sup> As emphasized previously, a standing Yakushi figure was not necessarily required to match Saichō's prototype in height in order to belong to the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage. Itō Shirō states that, in fact, other examples of *shū hanjōroku* standing Yakushi images from the late Heian period exist, which may indicate the presence of some trend at that time of fashioning Yakushi icons in this particular size.<sup>69</sup> The most famous example of a *shū hanjōroku* Yakushi figure that replicates Saichō's Yakushi icon is a standing image commissioned by the Tendai abbot Myōkai (985–1070) for Enryakuji's Jissōin.<sup>70</sup> The early-twelfth-century history *Fusō ryakki* mentions that this sub-temple was established in 1063, and that the principal icon was a golden, standing *hanjōroku* Yakushi figure.<sup>71</sup> In my view, the *shū hanjōroku* size emphasized the sanctity of the Yakushi icon by its association with the *danzō* tradition: among the numerous texts that discuss the merits of image-making, the aforementioned *Daijō zōzō kudoku-kyō* notes that the first Buddha image ever made—the Udayana icon—was a sandalwood image seven *shaku* in height (roughly 212 centimeters), rather than five *shaku*, as recorded in other versions of the story.<sup>72</sup>



29 *Standing Yakushi*. 11th–12th century. Wood, joined-block construction. H. 198 cm. Fukuoka Art Museum (originally Tōkōin, Fukuoka Prefecture).



29a Rear view of *Standing Yakushi*. Fukuoka Art Museum.

### Tōkōin Yakushi

Another example of a *shū hanjōroku* Yakushi icon of the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage is the Tōkōin Yakushi statue, currently preserved at the Fukuoka Art Museum (fig. 29).<sup>73</sup> The icon originally belonged to a group of Buddhist sculptures at the temple Yakuōmitsuji Tōkōin in the Hakata ward of Fukuoka, Kyushu.<sup>74</sup> Although the temple's original historical records have been destroyed, the sacred narrative associated with the image connects it directly to Saichō.<sup>75</sup>

Like the Dairenji Yakushi icon, this image stands taller than life-size at 198 centimeters, adhering to the *shū hanjōroku* tradition. It is made from Japanese cypress in the joined-wood (*yosegi*) method. Because of this technique and certain characteristics of its style, the image is speculated to date from the late (rather than early) Heian period.<sup>76</sup> The head displays a rather large cranial bump, upon which each snail-shell curl has been carved out individually. As for the figure's facial expression, the countenance is serene yet determined with its downcast eyes, straight nose, and

firm mouth. The Yakushi image wears an outer robe on top of the inner robe and, typical of the late-Heian-period style, the drapery folds are elegantly carved. The robes bunch up around the abdomen in several U-shaped folds, form the typical “Y” shape around the pelvic area, and fall straight down the legs. The carving is very shallow and abbreviated, also suggesting a late-Heian date, but the “rolling waves” (*honpashiki*) drapery pattern found on the back of the statue and on both sleeves imitates a style that was in vogue during the ninth century (fig. 29a). This Buddha makes the typical *abhaya-varada* hand gestures with the right and left hands, respectively. The figure holds a covered medicine jar in the left palm, but may not have held one originally, as the hands and wrists are later replacements.<sup>77</sup>

Because a fire in the mid-seventeenth century destroyed all of the existing temple records, much of Tōkōin’s purported history cannot be factually supported.<sup>78</sup> Nevertheless, the sacred narratives relating the miraculous origins of the temple have been preserved in more recent documents, and it is still possible to obtain information that ties the image back to Saichō and the Enryakuji lineage (although the historical authenticity of such information cannot be verified). A temple legend recorded in the nineteenth-century gazetteer of Chikuzen Province, *Chikuzen kuni zoku fūdoki jūki*, explains that Saichō personally carved the principal icon of Tōkōin when he returned to Japan from China.<sup>79</sup> Another temple legend claims that when Saichō returned from China and arrived in the province of Chikuzen, he acquired some numinous wood and carved seven Yakushi statues. The Tōkōin Yakushi was the fourth of these, and the accompanying bodhisattvas, Nikkō and Gakkō, as well as a set of Twelve Divine Generals were also purportedly carved by Saichō.<sup>80</sup>

Obviously, because the Yakushi is dated to the late Heian period and Saichō lived in the early ninth century, this story cannot be accepted as fact. Instead, the sacred narrative should be seen as an example of the Tendai school’s strategy for expansion into the distant province of Chikuzen during

the late Heian period—a strategy that called for a Tendai temple to enshrine a standing Yakushi image that was made in the likeness of Saichō’s own statue at Enryakuji. By representing the Tōkōin icon as one of Saichō’s own creations, Tendai ecclesiastics conferred the sacred authority of Saichō and the Tendai lineage on the icon, and the temple.

The Tōkōin Yakushi, with its alleged ties to Saichō, appears to have gained a reputation as an “auspicious icon” with renowned powers for healing and granting worldly wishes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>81</sup> In 1478, Ōuchi Masahiro (1446–1495), daimyo of Suō Province (in present-day Yamaguchi Prefecture), made two pilgrimages to the Tōkōin Yakushi, presenting offerings of a horse the first time, and of a thousand lanterns on his second visit. In 1579, a former vassal of Oda Nobunaga made a pilgrimage all the way from Kyoto to the Tōkōin icon in order to have his eye problems healed.<sup>82</sup> These instances indicate that, even as late as the sixteenth century, the Tōkōin Yakushi image was considered a potent healing icon and a focus of cultic activity.

### Nishino Yakushi/Kannondō Yakushi

The standing Yakushi image at Nishino Yakushi/ Kannondō (formerly Jūmanji) in Shiga Prefecture (fig. 30) is also an icon that belongs to the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage. It is made in the single-block technique from *keyaki* without a central cavity; the hands and feet are later replacements.<sup>83</sup> A coat of lacquer has been applied to the surface, and traces of polychrome still remain on parts of the drapery.<sup>84</sup> The Yakushi image has a very tall cranial bump, and the drapery hangs in the typical Y-shaped folds over the lower abdomen, forming distinct ovoid shapes around both thighs. The hem of the robe drapes over the feet, creating strong curves. Presently, the *mudrā* combination found on this Yakushi figure is *raigō-in*, the gesture of welcoming descent typically made by the Buddha Amida. As this image has always been referred to as Yakushi, however, and as the hands are later restorations, scholars generally believe that the statue was initially a Yakushi figure that was later converted into an Amida image when



30 *Standing Yakushi*. Late 10th–early 11th century. Wood, single-block construction; originally lacquered and polychromed. H. 161.5 cm. Nishino Yakushi/Kannondō (formerly Jūmanji), Shiga Prefecture.

the popularity of Pure Land Buddhism became widespread.<sup>85</sup>

The statue is 161.5 centimeters tall, a five *shaku*, three *sun* image. This height corresponds to the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi commissioned by Yuishū. More importantly, the temple's founding legend provides clues to this icon's link to Saichō and Enryakuji. According to the legend, Saichō purportedly built a Tendai temple called Senmyōji in the area in which Jūmanji now stands, and carved statues of Yakushi, a set of Twelve Divine Generals,

and an Eleven-Headed Kannon that he housed in a worship hall there. In 1518 this building caught fire and burned down, but fortunately, the locals were able to rescue the Yakushi and Kannon images, which were then enshrined in another worship hall. This hall in turn burned down in 1617, and after this second fire, local worshippers built another hall and enshrined the two images there. This last hall, called the Yakushidō, still stands today.<sup>86</sup>

While the accounts of the fires are probably true, the story of Saichō carving the Yakushi and

other images is likely an embellishment intended to increase the sanctity of Senmyōji upon its founding. This part of the temple's *engi* thus traces the Jūmanji Yakushi figure's sacred origin back to Saichō, definitively signifying that the image was made to replicate Saichō's prototype.

### Murōji Kondō Yakushi

The principal icon of worship at Murōji, enshrined in the temple's Golden Hall, is another standing, wood Yakushi image from the late ninth or early tenth century (fig. 31). This Yakushi image displays faint traces of polychrome and gold on its monastic robe, hinting that it was once lavishly decorated. Because of such features, the art historians Mōri Hisashi and Shimizu Zenzō believe that the principal icon of Murōji's Golden Hall was modeled after the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi statues.<sup>87</sup> Murōji, however, has never been a Tendai temple or under Enryakuji's control, and because Saichō's name does not appear anywhere in the temple's founding legend, it is more difficult to endorse this claim. Nevertheless, this icon and its possible links to Saichō and Enryakuji are worth examining.

The icon's proper identity has been partially obfuscated by the fact that, today, the Yakushi is referred to as a Shaka image, namely because it forms the *abhaya mudrā* with the right hand and a variation of the *varada mudrā* with the left, without a medicine jar.<sup>88</sup> As mentioned previously, this *mudrā* combination is commonly found on both Shaka and eighth-century Yakushi images. In fact, it appears that the identity of the icon was switched sometime between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when the temple came under the control of Kōfukuji and the Hossō school.<sup>89</sup>

Currently, seventeen Buddhist icons are enshrined in Murōji's Golden Hall, and this standing figure—the tallest of them—occupies the central position among the statues, which are arranged in a single horizontal line. What is most striking about this image is the polychrome application that once adorned its surface. Although nearly all of the pigments currently seen on the icon have been restored, the original colors are still intact in a few



31 Standing Yakushi. Late 9th–early 10th century. Wood, single-block construction; originally polychromed, with *kirikane*. H. 234.8 cm. Murōji, Nara Prefecture.

areas. Originally, the image was covered in white pigment; traces of yellow ochre over the white remain on some areas of the skin. Some remnants of reddish-brown and purplish-red pigment (*bengara*) are found on the skirt, with blue-green on the inside of the undershirt (fig. 31a).<sup>90</sup> The colors on the garments closely match the descriptions of the two Central Hall Yakushi figures commissioned by Ōtomo no Kunimichi and Yuishu. Shimizu also notes that *kirikane* was applied to the Murōji

icon's robe, just as it was applied later to Saichō's Yakushi.<sup>91</sup>

Another pertinent factor suggesting that the Murōji icon was modeled after the Central Hall Yakushi images is the strong presence of the priests Shūen and Enshū (fl. ca. 830–863), both of whom were directly connected with Saichō, in the Murō region during the first half of the ninth century.<sup>92</sup> The aforementioned Shūen was a renowned monk who had received training in Hossō doctrine from the prominent Kōfukuji monk Kengyō (714–793), the founder of Murōji. Following the death of his master, Shūen is said to have put much effort into further developing the Murōji complex, residing in the Murō area during his later years; he died at the temple around 835.<sup>93</sup>

Shūen had ties to both Saichō and Enryakuji, going as far back as 794, when he participated in a dedication ceremony (*kuyō-e*) at the Central Hall as a *dōtatsu*, a priest who assists the main officiant (*dōshi*) during a Buddhist service. In 802, he attended the famous Lotus Sutra Lectures organized by Wake no Hiroyo (d. 809) and Matsuna (783–846) at Takaosanji in Kyoto, which Saichō also attended.<sup>94</sup> He also studied newly copied Tendai works at Nodera Tendaiin in Kyoto. Moreover, Shūen received the *kanjō zanmai* (S: *abhiṣeka samādhi*) precepts from Saichō at Takaosanji, and his name appears on Enryakuji's *Gakushō meichō* (Register of Students) as the headmaster of the *shanaqō* (a course of study on Esoteric Buddhism).<sup>95</sup> Although the relationship between Shūen and Saichō later deteriorated, there is no question that, at one point, the two had close ties. Even more importantly, Shūen would have seen both Saichō's standing Yakushi icon at Enryakuji in 794, and another standing Yakushi figure at Takaosanji (present-day Jingōji) in 802. For these reasons, it is not surprising that he would have chosen a standing Yakushi image as the principal icon of worship at Murōji.

Enshū was one of Gishin's most prominent disciples. After Gishin's death, however, Enshū became involved in a conflict over succession; eventually banished from Mt. Hiei, he came to settle at Murōji. According to Sherry Fowler, Enshū



31a Detail of thighs, *Standing Yakushi*. Murōji.

first came to Murō in 832. In 843 he traveled to China, taking along his disciple Ken'e in search of Tendai teachings. The two monks returned a year later, and although no extant records confirm whether or not Enshū continued to have contact with Murōji, Ken'e took up residence at the neighboring temple Butsuryūji. Fowler surmises that the return of prominent Tendai monks such as Ken'e and Enshū to the Murō region may have stimulated patronage of the Murōji Yakushi image after 844, and that the particular style of the icon

was influenced by the knowledge brought back by these monks.<sup>96</sup>

Furthermore, having once been among Gishin's foremost disciples at Enryakuji, Enshū not only would have been quite familiar with Saichō's Yakushi image, but would have actually viewed it up close, as the icon was still openly displayed in the Central Hall at that time. In fact, he was most likely one of the fourteen monks who were fully ordained in front of the Yakushi icon in 823, during the first official ordination ceremony held at Enryakuji. Even more significantly, Enshū would have known that Gishin was responsible for having Saichō's Yakushi icon adorned with gold and polychrome in accordance with his teacher's last wishes.

Although Saichō and the Yakushi images at Enryakuji may have inspired the choice of a standing Yakushi figure at Murōji, Shimizu Zenzō has also pointed out fundamental differences between the Central Hall Yakushi images and the Murōji Kondō Yakushi icon. For one, an unusual carving technique known as *fuku renpashiki* was used for the robes of the Murōji image.<sup>97</sup> This "rippling-wave style" (as Sherry Fowler has rendered the term in English) displays a characteristic pattern of repeated groupings of one large, wave-like fold followed by two smaller, shallow folds. Shimizu believes that a particular studio employed this carving technique for icons made almost exclusively for Murōji and other temples associated with Murōji.<sup>98</sup>

Shimizu suggests that the aforementioned smaller Yakushi image in the Golden Hall (fig. 23), which stands to the left of the central Yakushi image, bears a closer resemblance to the Central Hall Yakushi statues, particularly as its drapery does not exhibit the *renpashiki* technique. At 164 centimeters in height, this image corresponds to the five *shaku*, three *sun* height of the Central Hall icon commissioned by Yuishū. Pointing to the restored hands of this Yakushi figure, Shimizu explains that the awkward position of the left arm and hand is probably the result of later changes to accommodate a medicine jar (since removed) on the palm. If the natural line of the left sleeve is traced,

the original forearm and hand would have been lowered slightly with palm facing out, suggesting that, originally, the hands formed the *abhaya-varada mudrā*, like the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi images.<sup>99</sup>

While Murōji experienced numerous shifts in sectarian affiliation (primarily between Hossō and Shingon) during its history, the temple complex also became a center of mountain asceticism and attracted many religious figures from various schools. Thus the fact that a standing Yakushi statue was selected as its principal icon of worship is not surprising. As emphasized in previous chapters, the Buddha Yakushi was known to be particularly effective when invoked in Buddhist repentance rites, which were often practiced by mountain ascetics. More importantly, the standing form of this icon was especially meaningful to such practitioners, who saw the standing posture as symbolizing the Buddha engaged in the practice of *gyōdō*.<sup>100</sup> Therefore, the presence in the region of Shūen and Enshū, both of whom had ties to the mountain temple Enryakuji and its tradition of Yakushi worship (and to Saichō and Gishin, respectively), most likely led to the creation of a standing Yakushi image at Murōji.

### THE CURRENT STANDING YAKUSHI IMAGE IN ENRYAKUJI'S CENTRAL HALL

To commemorate the twelve-hundredth anniversary of the Tendai school in 2006, Enryakuji held a public unveiling (*kaichō*) of the Central Hall Yakushi image, a secret icon that had remained hidden from public gaze since the Heian period.<sup>101</sup> The only photograph ever published of this icon appeared in the April 2006 special issue of *Bessatsu taiyō*.<sup>102</sup> As at Kan'eiji, a smaller stand-in replica (fig. 32), also a standing Yakushi, is displayed in lieu of the secret main icon. Most visitors to the temple are not even aware of the existence of the secret image, much less the fact that the original Yakushi icon installed in the Central Hall was destroyed by fire in 1435. Thus, Enryakuji's public display of the



32 Standing Yakushi. Date unknown. Gilt wood. H. 77 cm. Central Hall, Enryakuji, Mt. Hiei.

Central Hall Yakushi image is a complicated issue, but is nonetheless very telling of how a cult icon can promote a temple by embodying the memory of its founder.

When Enryakuji began its proactive reexpansion in the Edo period, the temple located a Yakushi statue at another Tendai temple in Gifu Prefecture called Yokokuraji. This Yakushi icon is a standing, plain-wood image; Yokokuraji's *engi* claims that the image was carved by Saichō from the same numinous wood used to make the Central Hall icon. Impressed by this provenance, Enryakuji had the Yokokuraji Yakushi transferred to its Central Hall, to replace the long lost original. Given that the Central Hall Yakushi icon had always been a secret image, however, it is curious that Enryakuji found it necessary to install another image—never to be seen—in its place. Perhaps the temple felt the need for an object that would serve as a physical embodiment of Saichō's original vows and teachings, which continue to be transmitted through this tangible, standing wooden form of the Buddha Yakushi even today.

As discussed in the previous chapter, in Asian traditions, religious icons constitute claims to religious authority. We have seen how Saichō's personal icon of worship became a chief cult image for Enryakuji. This Yakushi icon had several distinct characteristics: it was a standing, life-size statue (about five feet tall), made from sacred wood and left unpainted. After Saichō's death, Gishin had the icon adorned; this ornamentation featured a monastic robe painted red and an undergarment of blue-green. The robe was also decorated with circular floral patterns in cut gold. Most important, however, was the standing pose of this Yakushi

image, an element that was, at the time, an extremely rare iconographical feature. This particular form came to symbolize the cult of Yakushi at Enryakuji.

Even with Enryakuji's keen interest in integrating the newest forms of Esoteric Buddhism in the ninth century, the most important ritual space at the temple complex—the Central Hall—continued to derive its spiritual authority from the Yakushi icons housed there. This partly explains why, even with the overwhelming popularity of new Esoteric deities in the Heian period, Yakushi icons continued to be produced and enshrined in Tendai temples throughout Japan. Although Yakushi was worshipped, and Yakushi rituals practiced, by all schools of Buddhism, the standing Yakushi icon came to be associated primarily with the Tendai school at Enryakuji due to Saichō's personal devotion to the deity in this particular form. His Yakushi icon, enshrined in the Central Hall, encouraged the transmission of Tendai teachings and the legacy of the school's founder through new images made in its likeness.

In the distant provinces, Enryakuji's sub-temples often housed a standing Yakushi icon, thereby creating a strong link to Saichō and the Enryakuji tradition. The creation of new Yakushi icons that replicated the Central Hall prototype evolved into an effective means for Enryakuji to mark its religious identity in distant lands. Through this process, Saichō's Yakushi icon became the source for many standing wood Yakushi images. Although these lesser-known Yakushi images have often been ignored in the field of Japanese art history, they stand as salient visual and material evidence for the widespread devotion to, and worship of, Yakushi in the Heian period.



## 5

# Reflections on the Jingoji Yakushi and the Saichō Connection

THE ICON KNOWN POPULARLY as the “Jingoji Yakushi” is one of the most impressive specimens of sculpture in the plain-wood style from the early Heian period, appearing in every standard textbook on Japanese art (fig. 33).<sup>1</sup> As with other Yakushi images from this period, the right hand forms the *abhaya mudrā* and the left palm holds a medicine jar.<sup>2</sup> At this point in our study, readers familiar with this Yakushi image may be asking where it fits into the context of other standing Yakushi icons from the early Heian period. In other words, does this Yakushi figure at Jingoji, a standing statue made in the plain-wood mode, have any relationship to the main icon enshrined in Enryakuji’s Central Hall?

The striking image has a dignified presence with its heavy, disproportionately large lower body and massive, exaggerated limbs. Even though the icon was made by an anonymous sculptor, a high level of workmanship is evident in its features. The Yakushi figure’s compelling demeanor is produced in part by its stern, slightly menacing countenance (fig. 33a). The head is large for the body and displays an exaggerated cranial bump, while the earlobes are greatly elongated, almost touching the shoulders.

*Standing Yakushi. Jingoji, detail of fig. 33a.*

The icon’s determined, austere gaze is accentuated by the long, sweeping arched brows and narrow, sharp-edged eyes above a firm, fleshy nose. Further emphasizing the harsh demeanor are the prominent chin and full, pouting lips that curve downward in an expression of resolution.

The face is mostly unpainted, with subtle touches of color. Black and white pigments are used for the eyes, red for the lips, and black for the moustache. As in the Yakushi figure at Daikōji in Iwate Prefecture (fig. 27a), the Jingoji image also retains small chisel marks reminiscent of *natabori* on the surface of its face. It is unlikely that the sculptor left the face in such a manner due to negligence, as the rest of the body is smooth and polished. Therefore, these marks must have been left intentionally to accentuate the sacred quality of the wood used to make the image. Moreover, the irregularity of the facets was most likely a purposeful choice meant to further animate the image; light from candles and oil lamps dancing on these irregular surfaces would have animated the icon’s expression during ritual performances.<sup>3</sup>

Today this sculpture, officially designated as a National Treasure, is enshrined in the Golden Hall of Jingoji, a Shingon temple located in the mountainous region northwest of Kyoto, on Mt. Takao. Because Kūkai resided at the temple from 809 to 823, a connection between the Yakushi icon and the

MEDICINE MASTER BUDDHA



33 *Standing Yakushi*. 9th century. Wood, single-block construction, with touches of polychrome. H. 169.7 cm. Jingōji, Kyoto Prefecture.



33a Detail of face, *Standing Yakushi*.  
Jingoji.

Shingon master would seem more logical than a connection with Saichō. This chapter reassesses the Jingoji Yakushi icon, contending that Saichō may have been intimately involved in the creation of this image, acting as a religious advisor to the Wake clan.<sup>4</sup> The propositions put forth here tap into a much larger art-historical debate that has surrounded the Jingoji Yakushi for several decades. Much of the scholarly discussion around this icon has concerned its provenance and dating, both of which remain unresolved even today, leaving the Jingoji Yakushi the subject of a methodological deadlock.

Reconstructing the now-lost standing Yakushi icons from Enryakuji (and their iconic lineage) in

the previous chapters has led me to seriously reconsider the Jingoji Yakushi image once again, as the icon shares certain physical similarities with Saichō's Yakushi figure. The standing pose, in particular, was still an unusual and rare iconographical trait for ninth-century Yakushi icons, and the standing Yakushi from Jingoji—an image that once belonged to a mid-level aristocratic family—is a subject worthy of further investigation.

In order to reassess the Jingoji Yakushi image, the main historiographical issues will be outlined before moving forward with my corollary that the original meaning of the icon (at least at the time of its creation) was intimately connected to Saichō. The purpose of this chapter is two-fold: first, in

reevaluating the Jingoji Yakushi icon, fresh insights about the image will be provided, imparting further details about Saichō's Yakushi icon in the process. Second, the chapter reemphasizes the idea that the standing forms taken by the Yakushi icons at both Jingoji and Enryakuji were not coincidental. In fact, this chapter further reveals that Saichō may have inspired the creation of the Jingoji Yakushi figure as a standing icon.

### COMPETING THEORIES: JINGANJI AND TAKAOSANJI

The complex historiography concerning the Jingoji Yakushi image revolves around two interlocking issues: provenance and dating. In other words, questions surround the exact circumstances (when, who, why) that brought about the creation of this Yakushi icon. The issue of provenance has divided scholars into two main camps. One argues that the Yakushi was made as the principal icon of worship for Jinganji, a temple established in 793 by the courtier Wake no Kiyomaro (733–799). The other camp contends that the Yakushi figure was made for Takaosanji, a second temple that belonged to the Wake clan, associated with Kiyomaro's sons. Although the date of Takaosanji's establishment is unknown, the temple was most likely founded by Wake no Hiroyo, Wake no Matsuna (783–846), and Wake no Nakayo (784–852)—Kiyomaro's sons—at the beginning of the ninth century.<sup>5</sup>

The Wake clan was a powerful political family serving the court of Emperor Kanmu in the late eighth century. Wake no Kiyomaro had also served the courts of Empress Shōtoku (as the former Kōken was known during her second reign) and Emperor Kōnin. As one of Kanmu's trusted advisors, he was instrumental in the decision to move the capital from Nagaoka to Heiankyō. Scholars who support the Jinganji provenance for the Jingoji Yakushi image believe that Kiyomaro commissioned it as the principal icon for his temple, thus dating the image to 793. I take the alternate position, which contends that the Jingoji Yakushi was

made in the early ninth century as the main icon of worship for Takaosanji, the temple established by Wake no Kiyomaro's sons. This position allows me to trace the iconic lineage of the Jingoji Yakushi image back to Saichō. In order to prove this connection, we must first revisit the issue of provenance thoroughly, so that it is possible to place the icon in its proper historical and religious context.

The Jinganji/Takaosanji controversy was born of differences in scholars' interpretations of the history of the two temples leading up to the official name change of Takaosanji to Jingoji. The account in question is contained in the historical compilation *Ruijū kokushi* (Collection of the History of Japan; 892). The pertinent passage begins by noting that, in 824, Takaosanji received the status of *jōgakujī* (a government-subsidized private temple) by order of Emperor Junna (r. 823–833), who approved a request submitted by Wake no Matsuna and Nakayo.<sup>6</sup> The excerpt explains that the Wake brothers requested that this status, which first had been granted to their father's temple Jinganji in the early 800s, be transferred to Takaosanji, because Jinganji was no longer operable as a temple. Important to note here is that Takaosanji was given a new name, Jingoji, after becoming a *jōgakujī* in 824.

The text then relates a series of events that led up to Wake no Kiyomaro's establishment of Jinganji, including the infamous "Dōkyō Affair."<sup>7</sup> Dōkyō was a Nara-trained Buddhist priest known for his preeminent healing powers, and highly favored by the retired Empress Kōken.<sup>8</sup> With her support, he quickly rose to power at court in the 760s and was eventually appointed *hōō* (king of the Dharma) in 766, a high ecclesiastical title.<sup>9</sup> This appointment was sanctioned by an oracle from the Usa Hachiman deity, marking "a crucial state in his ascent toward the throne."<sup>10</sup> By the 760s, the deity of the Usa Hachiman Shrine in northeastern Kyushu (present-day Ōita Prefecture) was deeply connected to the Nara court.<sup>11</sup> According to Ross Bender, the deity Hachiman played a prominent role in sanctioning appointments to political office for the various clans (including the Fujiwara, in particular) that

competed for power.<sup>12</sup> The *Ruijū kokushi* passage refers to Dōkyō distributing “improper offerings to the gathering of gods (*kami*)” and “scheming with his fawning clique,” which may denote the clans that Dōkyō likely bribed in order to secure his rising political position.<sup>13</sup>

In 768, the chief priest of the Usa Hachiman Shrine, Nakatomi Suge no Asomaro (who was appointed by Dōkyō himself), confirmed Hachiman’s oracle and endorsed Dōkyō’s enthronement as emperor. At this point, it can be inferred that Dōkyō was well aware of the growing importance of the Usa Hachiman Shrine, as well as the power of oracles, which he cleverly manipulated.<sup>14</sup> With the prospect of Dōkyō possessing the throne, however, Empress Shōtoku may have felt that the imperial line was in jeopardy. The passage in *Ruijū kokushi* notes that, in a dream, Hachiman appeared before the empress and confided his pain at seeing the weakening of the imperial line; he then asked Shōtoku to send him a messenger so that he could deliver an oracle. The empress thus dispatched Kiyomaro to Usa Shrine to receive another divine message from Hachiman. Empress Shōtoku certainly was not the only one concerned over Dōkyō’s possible enthronement; in the following lines from *Ruijū kokushi*, “the divine troops sharpened their spears and fought continuously for many years … the wicked were strong and the righteous weak,” the struggles between Dōkyō’s supporters and the anti-Dōkyō factions within the court are implied.<sup>15</sup>

Kiyomaro traveled to Kyushu in 769 and returned to court with an oracle from the Hachiman deity, which proclaimed that only members of the imperial family could ascend the throne.<sup>16</sup> The oracle further declared Dōkyō an imposter.<sup>17</sup> Hachiman also asked Kiyomaro to construct a temple in memory of this oracle. When Kiyomaro returned to court, the enraged Dōkyō exiled him to the province of Osumi (in southern Kyushu), and banished his sister Hiromushi (730–799), who served as Shōtoku’s lady-in-waiting, to the province of Higo (in western Kyushu). Dōkyō’s power, however, was not to last much longer. Immediately after the death

of Empress Shōtoku—his chief supporter—in 770, Dōkyō was demoted and exiled to Shimotsuke Province (present-day Tochigi Prefecture) as the supervisor for Shimotsuke Yakushiji, where he died in 772. With Kōnin’s accession to the throne, Kiyomaro and Hiromushi were both reinstated to their respective positions and allowed to return to court. Kiyomaro then requested permission to build Jinganji (Temple of the Vow to the Deity) in order to follow through with his promise to Hachiman. Although Emperor Kōnin granted this request, the sovereign died before Kiyomaro’s promise could be realized. Jinganji was finally built during Kanmu’s reign, and eventually awarded the status of *jōgakujī*.

The *Ruijū kokushi* passage states that in the tenth month of 793, Wake no Kiyomaro was granted permission to allot fifty-eight *chō* of rice fields in Noto Province (present-day Ishikawa Prefecture) to Jinganji. This information denotes that Jinganji was already a fully functioning temple by that time.<sup>18</sup> Some thirty years later, after Wake no Matsuna and Hiroyo’s request was granted by the Council of State, *jōgakujī* status was transferred from Jinganji to Takaosanji. With this transfer of status, Takaosanji was officially renamed Jin-gokoku-so-Shingon-ji (Divinely Protecting the Realm, Blessed with True Words Temple), or Jingoji.

### Adachi Kō’s Theory

Because Jingoji’s history involves two earlier Wake clan temples, disagreements have arisen regarding the provenance of the extant Yakushi statue. Historical records are unclear about whether the icon was first made for Jinganji and later transferred to Takaosanji, or whether it was enshrined at Takaosanji originally. One of the earliest attempts to uncover the provenance of the image was made by the scholar Adachi Kō in 1939.<sup>19</sup> In a theory that became widely accepted, Adachi proposed that Wake no Kiyomaro, a high court official, established a temple called Jinganji sometime between the years 782 and 793, and that its main icon of worship was a Yakushi statue—the extant Yakushi from Jingoji.<sup>20</sup>

To determine this provenance, Adachi closely examined *Jingoji ryakki* (Brief History of Jingoji; 1315), a compilation of records documenting the temple's history. *Jingoji ryakki* contains two earlier temple inventories, *Kōnin shizaichō* (Temple Asset Records from the Kōnin Era; 810–824) and *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō* (Record of the True History of Jingoji from the Jōhei Era; 931), both of which list the temple's assets, including its Buddhist icons.<sup>21</sup> A passage from *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō* notes the following in the Main Hall:

One *danzō* of the Buddha Yakushi, five *shaku* and five *sun* in height

Two bodhisattva attendants, 4 *shaku* and 7 *sun* in height

Additionally, *Jingoji ryakki* states that these images were enclosed within a curtain made of brocade, donated by the retired Emperor Go-Shirakawa (r. 1155–1158). *Kōnin shizaichō* also notes that the deity enshrined in the Golden Hall was one *danzō* Yakushi image, five *shaku* and five *sun* tall.<sup>22</sup>

Because both temple inventories mention that the principal icon of the Golden Hall was a *danzō* of the Buddha Yakushi five *shaku* and five *sun* (approximately 167 centimeters) tall, Adachi concluded that the Yakushi icon thus described was in fact the extant Jingoji Yakushi image, a close match at 169.7 centimeters in height. The main question that remained in his mind was whether these two inventories first belonged to Jinganji or Takaosanji. After careful scrutiny, Adachi concluded that *Kōnin shizaichō* was Jinganji's temple inventory, because during the Kōnin era (810–824), private temples were not required by the government to submit their asset reports (*shizaichō*) unless they were *jōgakuji*.<sup>23</sup> As Jinganji was awarded *jōgakuji* status by Emperor Kanmu sometime before Kiyomaro's death in 799, and as Takaosanji did not receive this status until 824, Adachi argued that *Kōnin shizaichō* thus belonged to Jinganji. From this reasoning, he concluded that the Yakushi icon listed in both temple inventories as a five *shaku*, five *sun* image, with a description matching the extant Jingoji image, was originally the main icon enshrined at Jinganji.<sup>24</sup>

### Nakano Tadaaki's Refutation

Nakano Tadaaki was one of the first scholars to challenge the widely accepted theory first put forth by Adachi. Contrary to Adachi's claim, Nakano argued that a Council of State directive (*dajōkanpu*) abolished the requirement for *jōgakuji* (such as Jinganji) to submit their temple asset reports to the state after 798.<sup>25</sup> Nakano thus contended that *Kōnin shizaichō* could not have belonged to Jinganji as it was drafted between 810 and 824, long after the requirement for such reports was eliminated. Nakano stated that the inventory instead must have been made for Takaosanji when the Shingon master Kūkai established the system of three temple administrators (*sangō*) there in 812. He further explained that creating a new private inventory of all of the existing temple assets at Takaosanji, in order to keep track of original items versus newly acquired ones (such as Shingon ritual paraphernalia), would have been in the interest of the three administrative priests.<sup>26</sup> By arguing that *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō* and *Kōnin shizaichō* belonged to Takaosanji rather than Jinganji, Nakano also asserted that the extant Jingoji Yakushi image was originally the principal icon of worship at Takaosanji, rather than Jinganji.

### Nagaoka Ryūsaku's Position

More recently, art historian Nagaoka Ryūsaku has produced one of the most exciting studies on the Jingoji Yakushi image, avidly refuting the theory that the icon originally belonged to Jinganji.<sup>27</sup> Building on Nakano Tadaaki's research, Nagaoka has also argued that Adachi's study did not necessarily determine whether or not the two temple inventories belonged to Jinganji, as the meaning of the term *shizaichō* was not fixed at the time and differed from temple to temple, especially during the Kōnin era.

But proving that the inventories belonged to Takaosanji could also be problematic. If *jōgakuji* were no longer required to submit their official temple inventories to the government after 798 (as Nakano had claimed), what reason did Takaosanji have to produce one? Nakano had contended that,

after the temple became a Shingon center, this change in administration and affiliation necessitated Takaosanji to draw up a report of its assets.

Nagaoka ultimately sided with Nakano's theory, but he also came up with other possible reasons to explain why it was necessary for Takaosanji (and not for Jinganji) to draft a temple inventory that was recorded in both *Kōnin shizaichō* and *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō*. Nagaoka surmised that temples continued to create asset reports for their own private usage, even if these reports no longer had to be submitted to the court. An asset report is mentioned, for example, in *Kōryūji engi* (838), the temple history of Kōryūji. The *engi* states that, during the Enryaku era, a senior prelate named Taihō suddenly fled the temple, taking with him Kōryūji's private asset report (*ruki shizaichō*).<sup>28</sup> In addition, an extant temple asset report known as *Anjōji garan engi shizaichō* (867) is not stamped with an official government seal (*kan'in*), evidence that it was also a private report.<sup>29</sup>

Nagaoka argued that, around the time *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō* was drafted in 931, at least six different types of temple asset reports were in existence.<sup>30</sup> These records were produced when a new senior prelate (*bettō*) was appointed to a temple to succeed the previous *bettō*.<sup>31</sup> In other words, the inventories documented in *Jingoji ryakki* were made by temples to officially note changes in their administration. Nagaoka thus postulated that Takaosanji created a private inventory of its property for its own use upon such a change in 812.<sup>32</sup> His research has made Takaosanji more plausible as the source for *Kōnin shizaichō* and *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō*, suggesting that the Jingoji Yakushi image was once the main icon of worship at Takaosanji.

### JINGANJI'S "UNSUITABILITY" AS A RITUAL SITE

Varying scholarly interpretations of a Council of State directive from 824.9.27, noted in *Ruijū kokushi*, have also obfuscated the provenance of the Jingoji Yakushi image. The aforementioned

directive describes the circumstances under which Takaosanji received the status of *jōgakujī*:

Presently, the topographical features [of the land surrounding Jinganji] are defiled and [the temple] cannot be [used as] a ritual hall. I [Wake no Matsuna] earnestly request that in lieu of [Jinganji], Takaosanji be designated as a *jōgakujī*, and be named Jin-gokoku-so-Shingon-ji.<sup>33</sup>

Adachi interpreted this passage as an indication that Jinganji had become "unsuitable" as a ritual hall, and that a "transfer" (*aitai*) was subsequently made to Takaosanji.<sup>34</sup> The key point here is that Adachi interpreted the word *aitai* to mean "transfer," with the implication that all of Jinganji's Buddhist icons and ritual paraphernalia were relocated to Takaosanji at this time. Takaosanji then received Jinganji's *jōgakujī* status, and to mark the occasion, was renamed Jingoji. This idea of "transfer" is also accepted by Samuel Morse, who has translated and interpreted the version of the same directive included in *Ruijū sandaikyaku*, a source dating from the second half of the Heian period, as a merger of the two temples. As Morse writes, "In 824, Wake no Matsuna petitioned the court for permission to combine Jinganji with Takaosanji."<sup>35</sup>

In contrast to Adachi, Nagaoka focuses on the word "defiled" (*owai*), which is included in the *Ruijū kokushi* passage to explain Jinganji's condition. He interprets the text to read, "the topographical features [of Jinganji's surroundings] are dirty and defiled (*owai*), and [the temple] cannot [be used] as a ritual hall." Nagaoka asserts that the choice of the word "defiled" was particularly meaningful, especially when compared to the version of the directive that appears in *Ruijū sandaikyaku*, which notes only that the land became "sandy and muddy" (*shadei*).<sup>36</sup> Nagaoka explains that the land on which Jinganji stood had thus become "unsuitable" for a ritual hall because of certain topographical conditions that had caused the sacred site to become "impure."<sup>37</sup>

According to Nagaoka, the word *owai* was imbued with deep religious significance, referring to

the “defilement” or “pollution” of a sacred space. In Japan, Buddhist notions of pollution came to incorporate indigenous beliefs concerning the necessity of proper ritual purification for the worship of *kami*. Substances or bodily conditions such as blood, menstruation, and disease were regarded as polluted states that transgressed the appropriate circumstances for *kami* worship.<sup>38</sup> Nagaoka contends that “sandy and muddy” topographical conditions could be interpreted as being “polluted and unsuitable” for a ritual hall. To make this point, he looks to an account of a volcanic eruption on a mountain called Chōkaisan in Dewa Province (present-day Akita and Yamagata Prefectures) contained in the entry for 871.5.16 in *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* (901). The passage notes that this eruption resulted in a flow of dark, muddy water; a foul smell; and a dam of dead fish, among other calamities. The account goes on to state that the *kami* of Mt. Ōmonoimi had set a fire that ravaged the mountain some fifty years earlier, when angered by the defilement caused by the disposal of corpses without proper ceremony; therefore, the volcanic explosion of Chōkaisan, which created a polluted environment, was likely due to the angered *kami* as well.<sup>39</sup>

Nagaoka argues that, similarly, the “sandy and muddy” conditions around Jinganji were considered too polluted for a temple to function properly there. Thus, the transfer of Jinganji’s Buddhist icons and ritual paraphernalia to the newly consecrated Takaosanji/Jingoji would have been considered highly inappropriate, as the items that had occupied the polluted space would have been defiled as well.<sup>40</sup> To validate his argument, Nagaoka mentions a Council of State directive from 849.12.5 commanding that sacred texts and images from various “defiled” temples be collected and stored in a purification temple (*jōji*), and that appropriate rituals of worship and offerings (*raihai kuyō*) be performed for these items.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, transferring sacred icons from one temple to another was seen as an extremely delicate (and potentially dangerous) enterprise during the early Heian period, according to

Nagaoka.<sup>42</sup> An entry from *Ruijū kokushi* mentions the transfer of four Guardian King statues from a temple called Ōnojō Shitennōji to Konkōmyōji in the province of Chikuzen (present-day Fukuoka Prefecture) on 801.12.1. When an epidemic occurred shortly thereafter, temple authorities interpreted it as a curse sent by local *kami* who were angered by the transfer of the icons. The authorities thus promptly returned the statues to the original temple.<sup>43</sup>

As the passage above demonstrates, generally icons were tied closely to their temples; thus it is even more unlikely that the Jinganji images would have been transferred to Takaosanji if the former had been deemed polluted. If, for some reason, the transfer of Jinganji’s ritual icons did occur, Nagaoka reasons that the event would have been significant enough to be documented officially; yet nothing is found in the written records that suggests the transfer of the temple’s icons to Takaosanji.<sup>44</sup> In any case, Nagaoka illustrates the high likelihood that, because of their defiled state, the main Yakushi icon and other sacred images from Jinganji were not brought over to Takaosanji.

### THE MEANING OF TAKAOSANJI’S *JŌGAKUJI* STATUS

To recapitulate, an 824 Council of State directive approved Wake no Matsuna’s petition to have Takaosanji designated as a *jōgakuji* in lieu of the Wake family’s other temple, Jinganji. Adachi and others interpreted the information contained in this directive to indicate a merger of the two temples into one compound. Yet it is more accurate to view this event as the allotment of Jinganji’s endowed status to Takaosanji *in place of* Jinganji. A merger implies that the temples’ assets (including their monastic communities as well as tangible goods) were also combined into one; a transfer of *jōgakuji* status, on the other hand, indicates that this status and its privileges were taken from Jinganji and given to Takaosanji.

*Jōgakujī* were privately founded temples that gained recognition and financial support from the state during the Heian period. The granting of this status (and its attendant funding) was a means by which the imperial court could incorporate the ever-increasing number of private temples into the administrative structure of the state. This allowed the state to control regional temples and reinforce its authority in the provinces. In return for receiving financial support, these private temples performed rituals and offered prayers for the welfare of the country.<sup>45</sup>

The character *jō* (定) of *jōgakujī* generally means “to set” or “to determine,” but just what this term denotes with regard to Heian-period *jōgakujī* poses some difficulties.<sup>46</sup> In fact, the *jōgakujī* concept embodied several different notions, including the idea that only a limited number of private temples could receive this prerogative, and that the institution would gain a set amount of financial aid from the state.<sup>47</sup> The fact that only a certain number of temples could be appointed *jōgakujī* by the court explains the need to switch Jinganji’s *jōgakujī* status over to Takaosanji. If Jinganji could no longer function as a temple, the Wake family had to transfer the temple’s *jōgakujī* status to Takaosanji in order to ensure that their family temple could continue to receive state support.

The conferral of Jinganji’s *jōgakujī* status upon Takaosanji was approved and granted because, for some time, Takaosanji had been an active center for Shingon teachings, which were of great interest to the court. Takaosanji’s affiliation with Shingon Buddhism began as early as 810, when Kūkai was invited to the temple to perform the Esoteric Niō ritual (*Niō hō*). Kūkai’s invitation to Takaosanji was most likely brought about by the enthusiastic recommendation of Saichō.<sup>48</sup> At that time, Saichō was keenly interested in the Esoteric teachings that Kūkai had received in China, and encouraged his own disciples to train under Kūkai. The Shingon master himself sent his disciple Jitsue to Mt. Hiei to attend Tendai lectures. This mutual exchange eventually prompted Saichō in 812 to write a letter to Kūkai (who was living at Otokunidera in Nagaoka

at the time), inviting him to reside at Takaosanji and exhorting him to develop a Shingon center there. Kūkai agreed, and in the tenth month of 812, he moved to the temple, which was gradually transformed into a Shingon institution under his spiritual and administrative guidance. The following month, Kūkai performed a Kongōkai initiation ritual (S: *vajradhātu maṇḍala abhiṣeka*) there; the month after that, he held a Taizokai initiation ceremony (S: *garbha maṇḍala abhiṣeka*) attended by Wake no Hiroyo, Wake no Matsuna, and Saichō, all of whom received the ordination.<sup>49</sup> According to Nakano, when Kūkai placed the three temple administrators at Takaosanji (also in 812), this finalized the temple’s transition from a Tendai institution under Saichō’s guidance to a Shingon center under Kūkai’s administration.<sup>50</sup>

Upon receiving *jōgakujī* status, Takaosanji was awarded a “determined” number of monks to administer the temple; *Ruijū kokushi* notes that seventeen monks were appointed to Takaosanji to continuously practice the Three Mysteries (proper training of the body, speech, and mind in Esoteric teaching), and twenty-seven newly ordained priests of rectitude were appointed to recite the *Sutra of the Benevolent Kings* on a regular basis, in order to protect the country’s borders.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, to mark its new Shingon affiliation, Takaosanji was officially renamed Jin-gokoku-so-Shingonji.

## THE STANDING YAKUSHI ICON

The complex and little-known history behind the establishment of Jingoji, as detailed above, has obscured certain salient information regarding Saichō’s presence at the temple and his possible connection to its Yakushi icon. The position that the extant Jingoji Yakushi was originally made for Takaosanji, rather than Jinganji, was established earlier in this chapter. With this perspective, new insights regarding the icon become possible, especially in terms of its relation to Saichō.

As we have noted, both *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō* and *Kōnin shizaichō* mention that the principal icon

of Jingoji was a life-size, standing Yakushi statue, five *shaku* and five *sun* in height—significantly, the same height as recorded for Saichō's Yakushi image. According to *Jingoji ryakki*, Takaosanji's main sanctuary (inside which the Yakushi icon would have been installed) was a hall three bays wide with a cypress-bark roof, surrounded by corridors (*hisashi*) on all four sides.<sup>52</sup> This worship hall was called the Konpondō, strongly suggesting a connection to Enryakuji's Central Hall, the Konpon Chūdō.<sup>53</sup>

Like Saichō's Yakushi statue, the Jingoji icon is one of the earliest known wood images from the Heian period made as a life-size, standing Buddha. In Chapter Three we saw that Saichō modeled his own personal Yakushi image after the standing Yakushi figure from the former Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall (fig. 12), an innovative new type to emerge in the late eighth century. Similarly, the Jingoji Yakushi icon's formalistic similarities to the Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall image have been pointed out by numerous scholars, further strengthening the links between the three Yakushi icons from Tōshōdaiji, Enryakuji, and Jingoji.

The images from the former Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall, with their emphasis on corpulent, full bodies, reflect new forms and techniques from Central Asia and Tang China introduced by Ganjin and the artists he brought back to Japan.<sup>54</sup> The powerful rendering of the deeply incised drapery folds seen in the Tōshōdaiji group also reflects Central Asian trends that became popular in China during the mid-eighth century.<sup>55</sup> The Jingoji icon, like Saichō's Yakushi, is a representative work from this transitional phase in the late eighth and early ninth centuries in which unpainted wood images made in the single-block technique came to steadily replace dry-lacquer figures.<sup>56</sup>

Noting the formalistic similarities between the Jingoji and Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall Yakushi icons, Asai Kazuharu observes that both images display round, heavy bodies accentuated by thick thighs, giving the appearance of solidity and denseness. They both resemble thick tree trunks, from which the divine form of Yakushi emerges. Asai notes,

however, that the similarities between the two end there, as the Tōshōdaiji Yakushi image remains a re-interpretation of Tang Chinese marble Buddha statues.<sup>57</sup> In contrast, the Jingoji Yakushi icon represents a clear departure from this model, in the sense that the sculptor has made a real attempt to draw out certain striking features of the wood.<sup>58</sup> As Nagaoka Ryūsaku states, “the sculptor utilizes the material freely and very consciously. He deliberately varies his chiseling technique in [certain] areas to complement and fully utilize the material of the wood.”<sup>59</sup> Therefore, comparing the styles of the Tōshōdaiji and Jingoji icons, it is evident that the latter was made much later than the former.<sup>60</sup>

This attempt to draw out the inherent character of the wood was based on the fact that the Jingoji image was conceived as a sacred sandalwood icon, much like the Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall images and Saichō's Yakushi figure. As we have noted, in the early Heian period, Buddhist icons conceptualized as *danzō* were made from indigenous, high-quality aromatic woods in the single-block construction method, and either left unpainted or polychromed to give the appearance of continental sandalwood icons.<sup>61</sup> Earlier studies on Heian wood icons, especially those made from indigenous species and conceived as *danzō*, listed *hinoki* as the predominant type of wood used for such images. A recent study by Kaneko Hiroaki and colleagues, however, has demonstrated that the majority of sandalwood statues made in the single-block technique were in fact made of *kaya*. Kaneko and his collaborators scientifically tested and analyzed eighth- and ninth-century wood sculptures from all regions of Japan, and concluded that, irrespective of size or sculptural style, *kaya* was the main type of wood used to make images conceived as *danzō*.<sup>62</sup>

An earlier study also revealed that the wood used for the Jingoji Yakushi and Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall images, previously analyzed as *hinoki*, was in fact *kaya*.<sup>63</sup> Kaneko and his team also examined dry-lacquer and clay statues from the eighth century in order to compare the selection of wood used for the armatures with plain-wood images, and found that *hinoki* and *keyaki* were consistently employed more

frequently than Japanese nutmeg in this case.<sup>64</sup> Thus, the conscious selection of wood for the armatures of dry-lacquer and clay images reflects a structural (or technical) concern, whereas the use of Japanese nutmeg for plain-wood images strongly suggests a religious incentive for the sculpting of *danzō* from indigenous wood.<sup>65</sup>

The height, material, and standing posture of the Yakushi images from Tōshōdaiji, Enryakuji, and Jingoji strongly imply their iconic connections to each other; furthermore, the Enryakuji and Jingoji images may be interpreted as newer adaptations of the *danzō* from Tōshōdaiji's former Lecture Hall. But what evidence links the Jingoji Yakushi icon more directly to Saichō?

### SAICHŌ AND THE WAKE CLAN

It is reasonable to assume that, when constructing a temple, a lay patron would consult a religious authority knowledgeable about such matters, from the building of worship halls to the choice of Buddhist icons. The Wake brothers had close ties to the priest Saichō during the early years of Takaosanji's development, and the possibility exists that the installment of a standing Yakushi image as the main icon of worship was due largely to Saichō's influence. The Tendai master may have acted as a religious advisor to the Wake brothers, playing a key role in the making of Takaosanji's Yakushi icon, known today as the Jingoji Yakushi.

Wake no Hiroyo and Matsuna were not only avid supporters of Saichō, but pious Buddhists with a keen interest in adopting new Buddhist rituals, icons, and practices.<sup>66</sup> Hiroyo, the eldest son, began his career at the Bureau of Education (Daigakuryō), eventually becoming its head. He held a number of high government offices during Emperor Kanmu's reign, such as Assistant Master (*shō*) and Master (*taifu*) of the Ministry of Personnel (Shikibushō), and later Vice Controller of the Left (*sachūben*) in the Ministry of Central Affairs (Nakatsukasashō).<sup>67</sup> Hiroyo also established the family's school and library (Kōbun'in), which

contained several thousand volumes of books. Like his brother, Matsuna began his career at the Bureau of Education and served in various government posts, including Assistant Master and Master in the Ministries of Civil Administration (Jibushō), Central Affairs, Justice (Gyōbushō), and Popular Affairs (Minbushō).<sup>68</sup>

One plausible reason for the establishment of Takaosanji by the Wake brothers was to create an appropriate burial site for their father, Kiyomaro, who died in 799.<sup>69</sup> Tsuji Zennosuke has suggested that Hiroyo and Matsuna's patronage of Saichō followed from Kiyomaro's own support of the Tendai master.<sup>70</sup> In any case, Nakano Tadaaki believes that Wake no Hiroyo was a follower of Saichō's teachings, and that he may have consulted Saichō regarding the establishment of Takaosanji. As one example to support his theory, Nakano points to the similarity between the names "Takaosanji" and "Hieizanji," both names derived from the sacred mountains on which the temples were founded. Nakano suspects that the Wake clan's choice of Mt. Takao as the site for their new temple was based on Saichō's recommendations.<sup>71</sup> Also noteworthy is the fact that, when considering the locations of the two temples in relation to Heiankyō, Hieizanji and Takaosanji are situated like mirror images directly northeast and northwest of the capital, respectively.

Even though the exact year of Takaosanji's founding is not recorded, the general consensus is that the temple was fully functioning by 801, as the famous Takaosanji Lotus Sutra Lectures were held the following year.<sup>72</sup> According to *Eizan daishiden*, on 802.1.19, fourteen "eminent monks" (*daitoku*) from Nara were invited to the temple, each to give a lecture on the *Lotus Sutra* in an event sponsored by Hiroyo and Matsuna as the first of this lecture series.<sup>73</sup> This first day of lectures was most likely intended as a memorial service for the brothers' aunt, Hiromushi (once exiled during the Dōkyō incident), as the nineteenth day of the first month of 802 was exactly three years after her death.<sup>74</sup>

Saichō himself had held a *Lotus Sutra* meeting at Hieizanji in 801, inviting ten eminent monks from

the Seven Great Temples of Nara to give lectures at the Central Hall.<sup>75</sup> Matsuna and Hiroyo most likely attended these lectures, and must have desired to hold a similar event at Takaosanji the following year.<sup>76</sup> The ten Nara priests who attended the lectures at Hieizanji were among those invited to Takaosanji in 802. Exactly when Saichō attended the Takaosanji Lotus Sutra Lectures, and what kind of role he played in their organization, have been subjects of debate among scholars. Those who have maintained Saichō's central role in the lectures have suggested that he attended from the first month of 802, while others have argued that he made an appearance only halfway through the series, from the fourth month of that year—therefore implying that Saichō's role in the lecture series was minimal.<sup>77</sup>

In a more recent study, Saeki Arikiyo has given evidence for Saichō's involvement with the lectures even prior to 802. According to *Hiei daishi gyōshaku*, written by Gishin's disciple Enchin (814–891), Saichō was invited to Takaosanji not as a lecturer but as a *shōja*, a kind of referee who decided disputed issues at the talks (which were more like debates) and declared the winners and losers. Such a role would have necessitated Saichō's participation from the very beginning of the series.<sup>78</sup> A personal letter that Hiroyo wrote to Saichō about six months prior to the Lotus Sutra Lectures further demonstrates the close relationship between these men during Takaosanji's early years; Hiroyo even signs his letter humbly as "Hiroyo, your disciple."<sup>79</sup> In this letter, Hiroyo invites Saichō to Takaosanji before the scheduled event to consult with him on certain matters pertaining to the lectures. As Hiroyo writes, "Please give us your instructions beforehand ... As for miscellaneous matters, we can decide on them after we actually meet, when the details will be presented."<sup>80</sup> These lines show that Saichō was invited to Takaosanji in 801, most likely to help organize the event as a religious consultant, based on his own experience holding the lectures at Hieizanji that same year. The letter demonstrates that Hiroyo was a great admirer of Saichō; in fact, it was likely Hiroyo's early support of the

monk that drew the attention of Emperor Kanmu, who sent Saichō and his disciple Gishin to China in 804 to study Tendai doctrine.<sup>81</sup>

Positing an intimate relationship between Wake no Hiroyo and Saichō gives rise to new insights regarding the Jingoji Yakushi image. Given that seated forms of Yakushi dominated the aristocratic temples of Nara, the choice of a standing Yakushi icon at Takaosanji—a private temple founded by a family of middle-ranked court nobles—is not typical, and must be considered a deliberate and well-contemplated decision. As mentioned above, Takaosanji and Hieizanji were both established deep in the mountains; Hieizanji was strategically positioned overlooking the northeastern border of Heiankyō, while Takaosanji stood over the northwestern border. Situated on sacred mountains, both temples were associated therefore with mountain asceticism, and comprised ideal sites for Yakushi *keka* rituals. And as discussed in Chapter Three, the standing form of Yakushi was particularly relevant for ascetic practices at mountain temples.

Saichō's likely influence on the Wake brothers' decision to install a standing Yakushi icon at Takaosanji is further supported by the ritual association of Yakushi with the *Lotus Sutra*. Mimi Yiengpruk-sawan has observed that, in the twelfth century, the Tendai temple Motsūji in the Hiraizumi region was a center for healing, combining references to the *Lotus Sutra* with Yakushi images in multiple visual representations.<sup>82</sup> The close association between Yakushi images and the *Lotus Sutra* is also found in *Seireishū*, a collection of poems written by Kūkai. In this collection, Kūkai notes that, in 827, statues of Yakushi and the bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō, along with a copy of a *Lotus Sutra Mandala* (*Hokke hō mandara*) painted in gold, were made in memory of Emperor Kanmu's third son, Prince Iyo, who had died in 807. Twenty priests (including Kūkai) were invited to attend the *Lotus Sutra* Lectures held on this occasion.<sup>83</sup> Such Yakushi images may have functioned to perpetually create a "purifying place" through their frequent use in Yakushi *keka* rites.<sup>84</sup> The rationale behind the Tendai practice of

combining the *Lotus Sutra*, the school's most important scripture, with Yakushi worship becomes evident when we consider that the sutra emphasizes healing practices. Although Yakushi is not mentioned in the sutra, this scripture features a bodhisattva known as Bhaisajya-rāja (King of Medicine), and comprises a key text in the tradition of Buddhist healing deities.<sup>85</sup> As Yakushi was the most important deity at Hieizanji during Saichō's lifetime, and as the *Lotus Sutra* was likewise the core of Tendai doctrine and faith, images of Yakushi were most likely paired with the teachings expounded in the sutra to further underscore notions of spiritual and physical healing.

Given that Saichō had a personal affinity for this deity, as well as a vested interest in the teachings of the *Lotus Sutra* (which emphasize spiritual healing), it is not surprising that these two independent systems of thought were highlighted and synthesized at Hieizanji. Similarly, in the early history of Takaosanji, both the Yakushi icon and the *Lotus Sutra* Lectures held at the temple reflected the strong presence of Saichō and Tendai cultic practices. Although the temple's ties to the Tendai school and Saichō have been overshadowed by Kūkai's later presence at the site and its subsequent transformation into a Shingon center, the standing Yakushi icon enshrined at Takaosanji epitomizes

Tendai ritual practices and beliefs. The Wake brothers embraced these Tendai elements during Takaosanji's early years in a bid to establish a completely different kind of Buddhist center from those found in Nara, under the guidance of their spiritual advisor, Saichō.

One of the most important standing Yakushi icons from the ninth century, the Jingoji Yakushi has been the subject of an ongoing art-historical dispute over the question of its provenance—namely, whether the icon was first made for Wake no Kiyomaro's temple, Jinganji, or commissioned by his sons, Hiroyo and Matsuna, for the second Wake family temple, Takaosanji. After exploring some of the complexities of these arguments, it is reasonable to conclude that the Jingoji Yakushi was the principal icon originally made for Takaosanji. Because Wake no Matsuna and Hiroyo were enthusiastic supporters of Saichō during the temple's early years, it is not hard to believe that Saichō was most likely the religious advisor who compelled the Wake brothers to install a standing Yakushi icon, similar to the image enshrined at Enryakuji, at Takaosanji. Even though Jingoji's affiliation with the Shingon school has veiled the relationship between Saichō and the Wake family today, the Jingoji Yakushi's standing form is a firm testament to the Tendai master's past presence and influence at Takaosanji.



# The Magnificent Seven: Shichibutsu Yakushi Icons and Ritual

**A**S EMPHASIZED PREVIOUSLY in this study, Yakushi *keka* rites were frequently practiced by the state in the early ninth century to pray for the welfare of the country during times of great distress. By the end of the century, however, the performance of state-sponsored Yakushi *keka* had declined, eventually to disappear. This change may be explained by the rise in prominence of other new religious rituals. Yakushi's role as vanquisher of angry ghosts gradually diminished with the emergence of rituals designed specifically for the pacification of fearsome spirits.<sup>1</sup>

In addition, Esoteric Buddhism dramatically changed the nature of Buddhist rituals and the associated production of icons.<sup>2</sup> The Shingon school, with its elaborate rituals and bedazzling pantheon of foreign, awe-inspiring tantric deities, caught the immediate attention of the court when Kūkai returned from China in 806. Subsequently, dynamic, ferocious-looking deities such as Fudō Myōō gradually took over Yakushi's apotropaic function of mollifying malevolent spirits and other negative entities. For the Tendai school, however, it was not until the 850s—when the monks Ennin and Enchin brought back the latest forms of Esoteric practice

from China—that Enryakuji transformed itself into a new center for Tendai Esotericism.<sup>3</sup>

Enryakuji developed a new Esoteric Yakushi ritual for the sake of the temple's aristocratic patrons, who were keenly interested in these novel, efficacious practices that would provide them with both worldly and spiritual benefits. With the decline of state-sponsored Yakushi *keka*, it might seem that Yakushi worship in general, along with the production of Yakushi icons, would have decreased. But on the contrary, devotion to Yakushi remained prevalent throughout the Heian period. Yakushi's continuing popularity in Heian religious culture was due largely to Enryakuji's establishment of a monopoly over Yakushi icons and ritual, and creation of the new Esoteric rite. This Tendai ritual utilized not just one, but seven Medicine Buddha icons, known collectively as "Shichibutsu Yakushi." As one of the most prominent Esoteric rites conducted by the Tendai school, the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual (*Shichibutsu Yakushi hō*) became associated exclusively with the Tendai lineage.

## SHICHIBUTSU YAKUSHI IMAGES AT KOKŌKAKU AND MATSUMUSHIDERA

Contemporary ritual for the consecration of the imperial robes, Enryakuji, detail of fig. 43.

Although very few Shichibutsu Yakushi icons are extant today, two remarkable sets have survived as

complete units of seven Yakushi statues, made for the purpose of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual. One group is currently displayed at Kokōkaku, a treasure museum that stores and exhibits Buddhist images salvaged from three defunct temples on Mt. Kodakami in Shiga Prefecture. Showcased at the museum are seven standing Yakushi statues dated to the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, made of either *hinoki* or *kaya* (fig. 34). These seven images, each approximately 70 centimeters tall, wear robes covering both shoulders; their right arms are raised in the *abhaya mudra*, while their left hands are lowered, each holding a medicine jar in the palm. Another set of seven Yakushi, also dated to the thirteenth century, is enshrined at Matsumushidera in Chiba Prefecture (fig. 35).<sup>4</sup> The central

Yakushi icon is seated and larger than the remaining six, all of which are standing.

Both sets of Yakushi images, although normally excluded from the canon of Japanese Buddhist art as they are not considered masterpieces, are invaluable works of the late Heian and Kamakura periods that provide a fruitful point of entry into the significant cultic and ritual transformations of Yakushi worship that took place at the time. The images comprise vital material evidence of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual, which eventually replaced Yakushi keka and became popular among members of the court and high aristocracy.

The obscure provenance of the Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera images has discouraged scholarly attention. The icons have rarely, if ever, appeared in



34 *Shichibutsu Yakushi*. Late 12th–early 13th century. Wood, single-block construction. Approx. H. 70 cm. Kokōkaku, Shiga Prefecture.



35 *Shichibutsu Yakushi*. 13th century. Wood, single-block construction. H. (central seated Yakushi) 54.3 cm; H. (six standing Yakushi) 37.9–39 cm. Matsumushidera, Chiba Prefecture.

scholarly journals, museum exhibitions, or glossy catalogues.<sup>5</sup> On rare occasions when these two sets have been examined, the religious and cultural contexts for the emergence of such groupings have not been thoroughly considered. Itō Shirō, for example, has written about the Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera sets in an issue of the Japanese art journal *Nihon no bijutsu* dedicated to Yakushi Nyorai images.<sup>6</sup> Based on their stylistic and iconographical similarities, he has placed these icons in the same lineage as the Yakushi images from Shin Yakushiji, Shōjōji, Kokusekiji, and Shōjijī. In contrast, I consider the Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera icons through a “ritual lens,” arguing that they belong to a different lineage.<sup>7</sup> These extant images are ritually linked to a set of seven Yakushi icons that were once enshrined in Enryakuji’s Central Hall, icons that were also destroyed in the devastating fire of 1435.<sup>8</sup>

A visual analysis of these two sets of images will help us to extrapolate the life of these icons in their original ritual context. Not much is known about the creators of the Shichibutsu Yakushi at Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera. The Kokōkaku icons look almost identical, with the same standing posture, hand gestures, and carving style. While the sculptor is anonymous, based on the consistency of the carving, it is evident that all seven were made by the same hand. Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes apparent that each of the faces is slightly different from the others (figs. 36a, b, c). The sculptor individualized the face of each Yakushi image by manipulating such features as the arch of the brow, the breadth of the nose, and the size of the mouth. Even though the central Yakushi is slightly smaller than the other six, he is placed on a taller, grander lotus pedestal, and is the only icon of the set that



36a, b, c Details of faces, *Shichibutsu Yakushi*. Kokōkaku.

has the Sanskrit syllable denoting Bhaiṣajyaguru attached to his halo (fig. 36c). In the Matsumushidera set, the six standing Yakushi images all display identical facial features. Here, the seated posture marks the central icon as Bhaiṣajyaguru, the most important Medicine Buddha among the seven, according to the scriptures.

The central Yakushi image in both the Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera sets, made to stand out from the other six, represents Bhaiṣajyaguru, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata. As discussed in Chapter One, the scriptural basis for displaying seven Yakushi icons is found in Yijing's *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra* rather than Xuanzang's translation, as the latter only features one Medicine Buddha (Bhaiṣajyaguru), without his six other manifestations. The iconic configuration of seven individual Yakushi images had a very specific ritual purpose: these icons functioned specifically as centerpieces of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual developed by the Tendai school. To fully appreciate the extant icons at Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera, we must understand their dynamic life in the new Tendai ritual context. Alfred Gell's theory on object agency provides a useful framework for properly comprehending the significance of the two Shichibutsu Yakushi sets. He suggests that viewers must shift their habitual tendency to see icons as merely "artistic productions" and begin to consider them as objects, which enjoy a specific "social life."<sup>9</sup> The statues are "creative products," and as such, are imbued with an agency that can affect viewers. In the words of Daniel Miller, an "intentionality behind the world of artifacts" is present.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the Matsumushidera and Kokōkaku icons may offer a glimpse into the social network of Heian aristocrats and Enryakuji monks, and may reveal their impact on the devotees who created and utilized them.

I extend this notion of objects with a "social life" to encompass their ties and functions within the broader ritual context. In other words, the social networks and ritual actions of people linked to the Matsumushidera and Kokōkaku Shichibutsu Yakushi are embedded in these objects. And, while

a murky provenance might prevent us from knowing the patron(s) who commissioned and dedicated these two sets of icons, the presence of these images nevertheless signifies the salient roles they once performed: as interpolators between the late-Heian nobility and the divine.

## THE SHICHIBUTSU YAKUSHI IN ENRYAKUJI'S CENTRAL HALL

The Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera Shichibutsu Yakushi share an iconic and ritual lineage with a set that was once enshrined in the Central Hall of Enryakuji. To recapitulate, by the middle of the Heian period, a total of ten Yakushi images were enshrined in the Central Hall, all of which were standing icons. We have examined three of these images in Chapters Three and Four. Unfortunately, the Shichibutsu Yakushi were most likely among the statues destroyed in the fire of 1435, along with Saichō's private icon.<sup>11</sup> The Kokōkaku and Matsumushidera sets, along with a few written sources from the fourteenth century, are the only means by which we can begin to understand the use of these images in their new Tendai ritual context.

Little information about the Enryakuji Shichibutsu Yakushi images survives. According to *Sanmon dōshaki*, the Shichibutsu Yakushi icons were only about 60 centimeters (two *shaku*) in height, and therefore much smaller than the other three life-size Yakushi statues in the Central Hall.<sup>12</sup> The text also refers to the seven as *danzō*, indicating that they were carved from sacred wood such as *kaya*.<sup>13</sup> As *Sanmon dōshaki* relates, each Yakushi icon supposedly contained a small Yakushi image measuring three *sun* (approximately 9 cm), made by the Tang Esoteric master Faquan from Xuanfasi. Although these textual claims cannot be confirmed in the absence of extant images, this information links the Esoteric lineage of the Shichibutsu Yakushi back to Ennin, who studied under Faquan while in China.<sup>14</sup> The identity of the donor of the Shichibutsu Yakushi set remains unclear. *Eigaku yōki* notes that it was Enchin, fifth abbot of

Enryakuji, who commissioned the set, while other sources list the donor as unknown.<sup>15</sup> Because Enchin was a disciple of both Saichō and Gishin, and because, like Ennin, he also studied under the Esoteric master Faquan during his sojourn in China, his strong ties to Tendai Esotericism probably led to the belief that he commissioned the Shichibutsu Yakushi images. Shimizu Zenzō surmises that the Shichibutsu Yakushi set was made by 868, the year that Enchin became abbot.<sup>16</sup>

At some point during the Heian period, the Shichibutsu Yakushi became *hibutsu*, concealed within the inner sanctuary along with Saichō's Yakushi icon. The aforementioned diagram in *Kuin bukkakushō* shows the main altar in the Central Hall's inner sanctuary, where all ten Yakushi images were enshrined (fig. 21).<sup>17</sup> As related in Chapter Four, a notation on the side states that Jichin, who became Enryakuji's abbot in 1192, arranged the icons in this configuration.<sup>18</sup> According to this diagram, the set of seven Yakushi (indicated as "Shichibutsu Yakushi") were enshrined next to Saichō's Yakushi icon ("wood Buddha"). Curtains enclose the images, denoting that they were kept hidden as secret icons. The bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō appear just outside this enclosure; the remaining two Yakushi icons are also placed outside, with the other attendant deities.

In the second half of the Heian period, Enryakuji's Central Hall became the primary center for the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual, which utilized the original set of seven Yakushi icons created specifically for the occasion. Although these images had become secret icons by this time, they were probably brought out from the enclosure to be fully activated during the duration of the ceremony, in which they served multiple purposes.

### THE ESOTERIC SHICHIBUTSU YAKUSHI RITUAL

Because the Tendai school lagged behind the Shingon school in its knowledge of Esoteric Buddhism, Ennin, the young and talented disciple of Saichō,

was sent to China in 838 to master Esoteric practices and rituals. He stayed there for nine years, returning in 847 to transform Mt. Hiei into a center for Tendai Esotericism. Ennin was often called upon by the court to perform the new Esoteric rituals that he had mastered in Chang'an. One such ritual was the Eight-Syllable Monju Rite (*Monju hachiji hō*), known for its powers to avert calamities, especially epidemics. Another was the Ritual of Abundant Light (*shijōkō hō*), often performed upon the occurrence of unusual celestial phenomena, which were considered highly inauspicious. These new rituals received enthusiastic support from the court. For example, when Emperor Montoku (r. 850–858) established the Sōjiin (an imperially endowed cloister) on Mt. Hiei, he appointed fourteen monks to continuously perform the Ritual of Abundant Light at the site. Subsequently, Enryakuji's Sōjiin became the appointed place where this potent rite was performed for the protection of the state and the emperor.<sup>19</sup> These newer, more flamboyant rituals gradually replaced more traditional rites such as *tendoku* and *keka*.

Esoteric rituals came to provide for the personal needs of powerful nobles during the ensuing era of religious and political change. The tenth century was marked by an unstable social and political climate, as the old centralized system of governmental administration began to disintegrate. The northern branch of the Fujiwara clan ascended to power, while the influence of their rival families within the clan began to wane. Hayami Tasuku argues that these precarious circumstances led to an increase in the private practice of Esoteric rituals by the nobility, despite royal edicts outlawing such rites.<sup>20</sup> In 901, for example, the Minister of the Left, Fujiwara no Tokihira (871–909), felt compelled to revive a Council of State directive from 785 that prohibited the private performance of Esoteric rituals for the purpose of harming one's enemies.<sup>21</sup> The reissuing of this edict was an indication that many aristocrats were resorting to such rituals for the purpose of secretly vanquishing their rivals.<sup>22</sup>

Against this social, political, and religious backdrop, it might be assumed that the production of

Yakushi icons, formerly used for non-Esoteric repentance rituals, would have decreased. But it was not in the interest of Enryakuji, where Saichō's standing Yakushi image—the most eminent Yakushi icon of all—was housed, to let the Medicine Buddha become outmoded and obsolete. Saichō's Yakushi figure, as we have seen, had long since become a powerful symbol embodying the memory of the Tendai founder and his teachings. Therefore, instead of adopting a new Esoteric deity for the Central Hall, the Tendai ecclesiastics—in a remarkable adaptation—successfully created an Esoteric ritual using seven Yakushi icons. This ritual involved the use of proper Esoteric altars (such as a Fire Altar) and paraphernalia, along with multiple images of Yakushi, in the performance and display of the *mudrās*, mantras, and mandalas that defined Esoteric practice.

The earliest record of a Tendai Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual appears in *Shoku Nihon kōki*, which states that, on 850.3.19, Ennin performed this rite in Emperor Ninmyō's private quarters to cure the sovereign's illness. Sculptural images were not used for this event; rather, Ennin used paintings of seven Buddhas, which were hung in front of a bamboo blind, while seven-tiered lamps were lit in the garden.<sup>23</sup> After this performance of the rite in 850, the ritual does not appear again in the written records until 957, more than a century later. Several theories have emerged to explain this large gap in time. For one, the ritual may have fallen into disuse. A more likely hypothesis, however, is that such ritual practices were not recorded until the tenth century. Much of the extant information on these rituals comes to us from the diaries of the Fujiwara, the majority of them written during the tenth and eleventh centuries. In addition, Buddhist temples did not keep records of noteworthy ritual performances as a regular practice until the eleventh century. According to Brian Ruppert, such records were produced for archival purposes, in some cases to document the receipt of rewards from the court for the performance of Esoteric rites.<sup>24</sup> Thus, these records show the prevalence of Esoteric rites in the latter half of the Heian period. Even if we were to

assume that Shichibutsu Yakushi rites had been practiced in the early part of the period, the lack of ninth-century icons indicates that Enryakuji began performing the ritual more frequently from the eleventh century onwards.

The Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual was not used widely until Ryōgen (912–985), the eighteenth abbot of Enryakuji, revived it for his prominent Fujiwara patrons. In competing with the Tendai school's Shingon rivals, Ryōgen developed Esoteric rituals that were exclusively practiced by the school, enabling him to secure the enthusiastic support of the aristocracy.<sup>25</sup> According to Paul Groner:

After Ryōgen's time, it [the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual] ... developed into one of the special ceremonies that the Tendai school used to accentuate their differences from the Shingon tradition. Ryōgen had revived a ceremony that was potentially more impressive than rituals common to both Tendai and Shingon that focused only on a single image of Yakushi.<sup>26</sup>

Ryōgen's successful revitalization of Enryakuji first began around 939 when he met Fujiwara no Tadahira (880–949), then regent to the teenage Emperor Suzaku (r. 930–946). At that time, Tadahira was at the peak of his career, and was possibly the most powerful man in Japan.<sup>27</sup> Ryōgen's relationship with the Fujiwara clan continued with Tadahira's son Morosuke (908–960), who remained his primary patron until the latter's death. This relationship marked the beginning of Enryakuji's close ties to the court and the Fujiwara leaders, whose patronage allowed the temple to become one of the most influential religious institutions of the late Heian and Kamakura periods, cooperating with and often challenging the power of the secular elites.<sup>28</sup>

Ryōgen performed the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual for the first time in 957, to pray for the safe childbearing of Morosuke's principal wife, Kōshi (also known as Yasuko).<sup>29</sup> The ritual, held in the Central Hall, was a success, and soon after, members of the nobility sought out the rite for its efficacy in this purpose. In fact, both the *Yakushi Sutra*

and *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra* include the following assurance: “If there is a woman about to give birth .... Non-human beings will never snatch away the vital spirits of such a child.”<sup>30</sup> Clearly, Yakushi’s role had shifted once again to that of a skilled mid-wife who could ensure an easy and successful childbirth for Heian noblewomen.

In contrast to the state’s concerns for the welfare of the country during the ninth century, the more private concerns of the nobility were addressed to Yakushi through the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite. This change is evident when the rite is examined in the context of the Fujiwara’s system of regency to the throne. In order to secure the regency, Fujiwara nobles practiced “marital politics” by placing their daughters in the harem of the reigning emperor. For example, Fujiwara no Michinaga, a talented politician who dominated the monarchy through marital ties, married several of his daughters to reigning monarchs. In 1008 and 1009, Michinaga commissioned Yakushi statues and sponsored Shichibutsu Yakushi Rituals for his daughter Shōshi (988–1074), the royal consort to Emperor Ichijō (r. 986–1011).<sup>31</sup> The birth of a healthy male descendant (a potential heir to the throne) was one crucial strategy by which the Fujiwara nobles could reinforce and retain their authority at court. Therefore, they were committed to such rituals that were believed to assure the safe birth of an heir.

The frequency of the performance of this rite for the purpose of ensuring safe childbearing is substantiated by *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō gengyōki*, a record from a slightly later period. The document records the performance of forty-one Shichibutsu Yakushi Rituals, eighteen of which were conducted for this purpose.<sup>32</sup> Next to disease, childbirth was the leading cause of death for young women in Heian Japan, and the childhood mortality rate was also extremely high.<sup>33</sup> The Fujiwara regents, therefore, paid homage to Yakushi and sponsored Shichibutsu Yakushi rites with great enthusiasm, as their political authority at court depended largely on the survival of a male heir to the throne born from a Fujiwara mother.

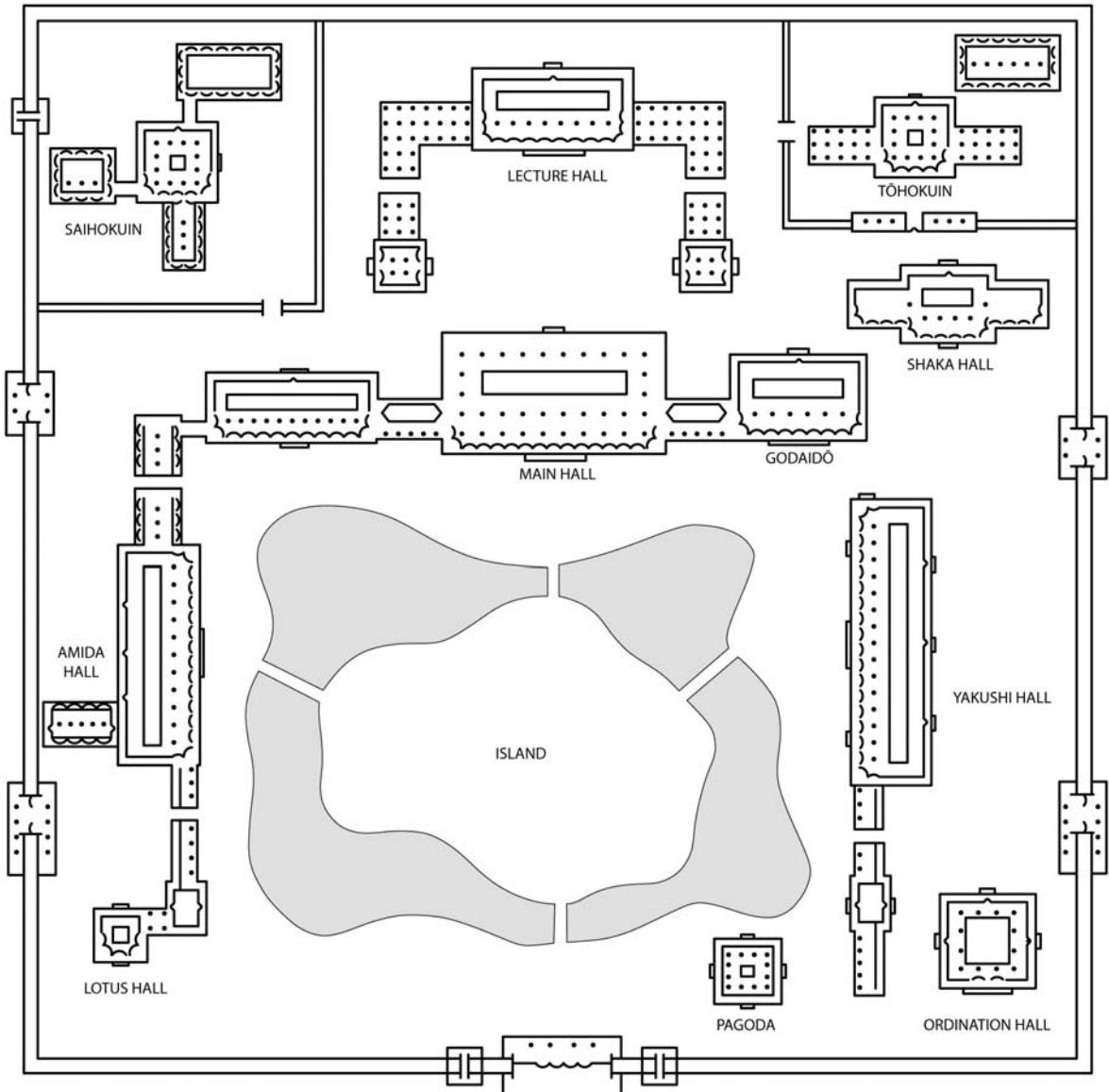
Increasingly, prominent members of the court commissioned this rite in seeking aid for a variety of private matters. By the late Heian period, the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* came to be regarded as one of the “Four Great Tendai Esoteric Rites” (*shika daihō*) performed at Enryakuji.<sup>34</sup>

## FUJIWARA NO MICHINAGA’S SHICHIBUTSU YAKUSHI WORSHIP

During the tenth century, many prominent nobles began to build their own private temples, receiving advice from influential institutions such as Enryakuji. Fujiwara no Michinaga, for one, constructed many temples and sponsored numerous religious rituals for himself and his family during his resplendent career at court. Michinaga’s religious beliefs, recorded in various written sources, offer a glimpse into the multifaceted devotional practices of the court and aristocracy in the latter half of the Heian period. Only by observing this religious eclecticism is it possible to illuminate Michinaga’s personal devotion to the seven Medicine Buddhas and the associated ritual practices.

Devotion to the Buddha Amida and his Western Pure Land by members of the Heian court and aristocracy—especially the Fujiwara—is well documented.<sup>35</sup> The splendor of the Phoenix Hall (Hōōdō) at Byōdōin, built in 1052 by Michinaga’s son Yorimichi in Uji (near Kyoto), is an unrivalled example of the aristocratic expression of Pure Land faith. Michinaga, like other Heian aristocrats, was not only a dedicated follower of Pure Land Buddhism, but also placed his faith in a variety of Buddhist deities and practices. His eclectic beliefs are evident in his establishment of Hōjōji, a temple that he constructed on the banks of the Kamo River in Kyoto.

Hōjōji was a large temple complex consisting of various worship halls filled with monumental Buddhist icons (fig. 37). Michinaga began construction of his temple in the seventh month of 1019, the same year in which he took the tonsure and entered the Buddhist priesthood. The first building to be



37 Plan of Hōjōji. Diagram by Douglas Miller after Shimizu Hiroshi, *Heian jidai bukkyō kenchikushi no kenkyū*, fig. 2-1-4.

completed (in the third month of 1020) was the Amida Hall, formally called the Muryōjuin (Hall of Immeasurable Life). This hall housed nine Amida images (*kutai Amida*) of *jōroku* size. The Jissaidō (Hall for the Ten Days of Fasting) was also completed that year.<sup>36</sup> Michinaga's wife, Minamoto no Rinshi (1040–1114), dedicated a worship hall known

as the Saihokuin (Hall of the Northwest) in the northwest corner of the temple complex in 1021. On 1022.7.14, a dedication ceremony was performed for the completed Golden Hall and Godaidō (Hall of the Great Five), and the temple was named Hōjōji. The worship hall housing seven monumental Yakushi icons, called the Jōruriin

(Hall of the Lapis Lazuli Radiance), was not completed until 1024.<sup>37</sup>

One of the structural innovations seen in multiple buildings at Hōjōji was the elongated hall (*chōdō keishiki*).<sup>38</sup> This architectural form was born of the necessity of creating a suitable space for enshrining multiple large-scale icons of worship. The Amida, Yakushi, and Shaka Halls, and the Jissaidō at Hōjōji all housed multiple monumental statues. The architectural historian Shimizu Hiroshi explains that the elongated hall enabled the display of the principal icons of worship in a single line, thereby showcasing each deity in equal status to the others.<sup>39</sup> The arrangement of nine Amida, enshrined side by side, in Hōjōji's Amida Hall was the first of its kind, and inspired imitation by other patrons, especially retired monarchs.<sup>40</sup>

Although there is no denying that Michinaga's Hōjōji was the culmination in architectural form of his vast wealth and power,<sup>41</sup> the temple was also a physical embodiment of his desires and anxieties towards the end of his illustrious life. From about 1018 until his death in 1027, Michinaga experienced serious health problems, which contributed to his ardent commitment to building the Hōjōji complex and enshrining its statuary. According to G. Cameron Hurst III, Michinaga suffered from severe chest ailments and blindness brought on by his diabetes.<sup>42</sup> As Michinaga's health began to decline, the once seemingly invincible figure became heavily dependent on the saving powers of Buddhist deities to restore his own well-being. After experiencing several episodes of chest pains in 1019, for example, Michinaga sponsored various Esoteric rituals at the Godaidō, a hall dedicated to the Five Great Wisdom Kings (Godai Myōō).

Court nobles in the late tenth and eleventh centuries sponsored all types of Buddhist rituals for their spiritual and physical well-being. Hayami Tasuku categorizes these rites into two main types: rituals for quelling evil influences (*jōbuku hō*, *gōbuku hō*), exemplified by rites dedicated to Fudō Myōō, the Immovable Wisdom King;<sup>43</sup> and rituals performed for the prevention of calamities and the increase of worldly benefits (*sokusai zōeki*).

The Tendai Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual fell into the latter category.<sup>44</sup>

As conflicts between high-ranking nobles vying for political power increased, so did their concerns over the vengeful spirits of the rivals who plotted against them. Even during the early eleventh century, when Michinaga dominated court politics, the belief that defeated members of rival factions would become vengeful spirits in order to wreak havoc upon the living remained prevalent. It was known among the Heian nobility that certain individuals practiced unsanctioned Esoteric rituals privately to torment their political opponents. For example, the eleventh-century historical epic *Eiga monogatari* (Tale of Flowering Fortunes) explains that Fujiwara no Korechika (974–1010), Michinaga's nephew, was clandestinely sponsoring the performance of a *Daigen hō* (Ritual of the Mystic King Daigensui)—a rite reserved exclusively for the court to appeal for the protection of the country—despite the fact that such sponsorship by a noble for private reasons was punishable by exile.<sup>45</sup> Korechika also was rumored to have cast an evil curse on a royal consort, a claim that did, in fact, lead to his subsequent exile.<sup>46</sup> Mimi Yiengpruksawan states that Michinaga was very fearful of such curses as well as vengeful ghosts, and often blamed them for his illnesses.<sup>47</sup> In this kind of anxiety-ridden climate, one of the most popular rituals intended to counter these malevolent forces was the Fudō Rite (*Fudō hō*), typically performed as a Five-Platform Ceremony (*godan hō*).<sup>48</sup> Michinaga's great faith in the Five-Platform Ceremony is evident in the prominent position occupied by the Godaidō at Hōjōji, on the same axis as the Golden Hall and connected to it by a roofed corridor (fig. 37).<sup>49</sup>

Michinaga's continuing ill health also led to his increased faith in the Buddha Amida and Pure Land practices, which promised the attainment of a wondrous afterlife in Amida's glorious realm.<sup>50</sup> Michinaga may have been preparing for his journey to the Western Pure Land even as he was hoping to recover from his ailments, given that the Amida Hall was completed first, before the Golden Hall and the Godaidō. The Amida Hall, which Michinaga

frequented for prayer offerings, was built as a sacred space where he would prepare for his death: it was here that the Buddha Amida would arrive in Michinaga's dying moment to transport him to the land of bliss.

The placement of the Amida and Yakushi Halls in relation to each other was also significant, as it symbolically represented the relative locations of these Buddhas' Pure Lands. The Amida and Yakushi Halls were built facing each other across a central pond, on the western and eastern sides of the temple complex, respectively. These halls, the pond, and the gardens that surrounded them heightened the splendor of the Hōjōji complex as an earthly manifestation of paradise. Shimizu Hiroshi has stated that the official names of the Amida and Yakushi Halls—the Muryōjuin and Jōruriin—specifically exemplified the respective Pure Lands of Amida and Yakushi.<sup>51</sup> As the *Yakushi Sutra* states, Yakushi's Pure Land in the East is similar in its merits to Amida's Western Pure Land, a beautiful place adorned by palaces and walls of semiprecious stones, with grounds of lapis lazuli.<sup>52</sup> Michinaga must have purposefully built the Yakushi and Amida Halls in direct relation to each other in order to create a physical realization of his vision of the afterlife. *Eiga monogatari* describes the sumptuous sight: "As the number of halls at the Hōjōji increased, people began to feel that the Pure Land must present a very similar appearance."<sup>53</sup> Some people even moved their houses to the north and south of Hōjōji, just so that they could "be close enough to that earthly paradise to see the Buddhas morning and evening during the short time remaining to them."<sup>54</sup>

Given his proclivity for Pure Land practices (as exemplified by the Amida Hall with its nine monumental Amida images), Michinaga may have had other reasons for building a lavish Yakushi Hall and enshrining seven larger-than-life-size Yakushi statues. The most palpable explanation is that Michinaga relied upon the Medicine Buddhas to prolong his life. *Eiga monogatari* observes that Michinaga had been planning to build a Yakushi Hall from around 1022, just when his health was rapidly

declining.<sup>55</sup> Could his plan for a grand Yakushi Hall, realized four years after the dedication of the Amida Hall, indicate that, in addition to dreaming of rebirth in Pure Land, he was also making a desperate appeal to the Medicine Buddhas to be healed?

Clues to understanding Michinaga's private worship of the seven Medicine Buddhas and his construction of the Yakushi Hall may be found in an event that took place in 1020. According to *Nihon giryaku*, on 1020.12.13, Michinaga went up to Enryakuji to receive the precepts at the Central Hall, where, on this occasion, the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual was performed for seven days.<sup>56</sup> Although the record of this event does not explain the connection between Michinaga's lay ordination and the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite, Yakushi was believed to protect those who followed the precepts from falling from their paths, and from being hindered by karmic obstructions (as discussed in Chapter Three). At the same time, Lori Meeks has noted that Heian aristocrats commonly took the precepts to forge a karmic connection (*kechien*) with a deity, gain personal protection, and accumulate karmic merit. The precepts were also sought when death, illness, or danger seemed imminent.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the performance of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual at Enryakuji in conjunction with Michinaga's lay ordination likely was motivated by his desire not only to observe the precepts, but—through the accrual of good karma—to prolong his life by the graces of the seven Medicine Buddhas.

Yet another reason for Michinaga's creation of a lavish Yakushi Hall with its seven Medicine Buddhas may have existed. Not only did Michinaga envision the Pure Lands of Amida and Yakushi by building his halls at Hōjōji, but he also may have wanted to guarantee his successful rebirth in Amida's Pure Land through his devotions to Yakushi, as paradoxical as that may seem. According to Nishio Masahito, Michinaga believed that Yakushi would act as a guide to Amida's Western Pure Land at the end of his life.<sup>58</sup> In fact, this notion of Yakushi as a facilitator for a devotee's delivery to Amida's Pure Land is mentioned in the scriptures, which state that those who hear the name of the Medicine

Buddha will, at the end of their lives, be led by eight great bodhisattvas to Amida's Western Pure Land, where they will be reborn.<sup>59</sup>

This idea that Yakushi would provide guidance to the Western Pure Land is highlighted not only in the scriptures, but also in historical narratives and popular tales from the Heian period. In a passage from *Eiga monogatari*, this belief about Yakushi is very clear:

Furthermore, a believer who has recited Buddha-invocations in the hope of going to the Pure Land, but who fears that he may not succeed in his objective, may call on the Healing Buddha to come with the eight bodhisattvas to escort him.<sup>60</sup>

The above passage indicates that this role ascribed to Yakushi in the scriptures was well known among the Heian aristocracy. In addition, a popular folktale, included in the late-Heian compilation *Konjaku monogatarishū* (Tales of Times Now Past), further clarifies the belief in Yakushi as such a guide in its description of a miraculous event that occurred at Hōjōji's Yakushi Hall. One day, Michinaga and other courtiers were participating in a ceremony in the Yakushi Hall when the monks on the east side of the hall began looking up towards the sky and shouting. Hearing this, the people on the west side of the hall wondered what was happening. When they looked up, they saw multicolored rays of light extending westward from the Yakushi Hall.<sup>61</sup> This miraculous event exemplifies the salient belief of the Heian nobility in Yakushi as a guide to Amida's Western Pure Land. Indeed, it seems that the careful placement of the Yakushi Hall at Hōjōji, directly facing the Amida Hall across the pond, was planned with this belief in mind.

In constructing the Yakushi Hall, Michinaga seems to have conceived of a building very similar to the Amida Hall. According to *Eiga monogatari*, both halls were decorated lavishly with the most expensive materials. The Amida Hall, for example, is described as having rafter ends covered in gold, metal fittings also made of gold, lacquered "dog barricades" (*inufusegi*) inlaid with gems and

mother-of-pearl, and beautiful paintings on its doors. Surrounding the main icons of worship were mother-of-pearl tables, on which offerings were made.<sup>62</sup>

Michinaga himself is given credit for coming up with the plans for the Hōjōji complex and its images. As *Eiga monogatari* relates,

He [Michinaga] turned ideas over in his mind all night long. How should the artificial hill be built up? The lake laid out? The garden designed? He must go on to construct a whole series of impressive halls. Nor could the images be run-of-the-mill affairs; there would be great numbers of golden buddhas sixteen feet tall, arranged in a row with a passageway running from north to south in front of them.<sup>63</sup>

Michinaga clearly had an elaborate vision for his temple complex, a vision that required the most skilled artisans of his time. Extant records show that Kōjō (fl. 990–1020) and his apprentice Jōchō (d. 1057), the sculptor best known today for designing the famed Amida image at Byōdōin, were the primary artisans who produced most, if not all, of the main statuary at Hōjōji.<sup>64</sup> As none of Kōjō's works have survived, his reputation as an accomplished sculptor who catered to the Heian court and aristocracy is not well acknowledged at present.<sup>65</sup> Kōjō, in fact, produced many images for members of the ruling elite, including Michinaga and the calligrapher Fujiwara no Yukinari (972–1027).<sup>66</sup> As Mizuno Keizaburō has observed, Kōjō is the only sculptor mentioned by name in the diaries of both of these men, and although he is not referred to by name for every commission, it is likely that he made many statues for the eminent courtiers.<sup>67</sup>

Patronage of Kōjō by Michinaga and Yukinari began around 1005. Kōjō's name appears for the first time in Michinaga's diary in an entry for 1005.10.23, which notes the production of an image of the bodhisattva Fugen (S: Samantabhadra) for the Sanmaidō (*Samādhi Hall*) at Jōmyōji.<sup>68</sup> For the courtier Yukinari, Kōjō completed a life-size golden Amida statue for the Golden Hall at Sesonji

on 1006.4.2. According to Michinaga's diary, on 1008.8.2, Kōjō completed a white sandalwood Yakushi image for a *shūzen* (literally, "performing good acts") ritual held for the aforementioned royal consort Fujiwara no Shōshi, Michinaga's daughter. On 1010.10.4, Kōjō presented Yukinari with Yakushi and Kannon images crafted of silver that he had been commissioned to make the previous year. In recognition of his production of life-size Buddhist images, Kōjō was presented with twenty-four *ryō* of gold by Michinaga in 1013. Assisted by Jōchō, Kōjō most likely also undertook the production of the nine *jōroku* Amida statues for Hōjōji's Muryōjin, possibly his last commission.<sup>69</sup>

Heralded today as one of the foremost sculptors of the Heian period, Jōchō first appears in written sources as Kōjō's apprentice in the production of the Muryōjin statues in 1020, the year that marks the official beginning of his illustrious career as a Buddhist sculptor. In 1022, Michinaga awarded him the title of *hōkyō* (Dharma Bridge Master), a Buddhist title rarely given to sculptors prior to this time, at the dedication of the Golden Hall images.<sup>70</sup> Jōchō's status as a sculptor continued to rise, and in 1048, he was awarded the title of *hōgen* (Dharma Eye Master) for the restoration of sculptures at Nara's Kōfukuji that were damaged in a fire. Finally, in 1053 he completed the monumental statue of Amida at Byōdōin for Michinaga's son, Yorimichi. The Byōdōin Amida is a particularly significant work, as it is the only image by Jōchō that remains extant. A source of inspiration for other sculptors, this figure is characterized by a new elegance and grandeur that typify what came to be known as the "Jōchō style."<sup>71</sup>

Both Kōjō and Jōchō were responsible for the new technical innovation of the joined-block (*yosegi*) technique. In contrast to the *ichiboku* method, in which an image was carved out of a single block of wood, a joined-block statue was constructed from many segments of wood joined together to form a unified image. In this technique, a blueprint of the overall statue was drawn up by the master sculptor, and a section of the statue (such as the head) was assigned to a group of assistant carvers who were

responsible for carving that particular portion of the image. This kind of assembly-line production was a creative process that answered the heavy demand for images in the late Heian period. *Eiga monogatari* offers a description of the process: "In one place, master joiners worked on sacred images, assisted by a huge crew of one hundred image-carvers. What assignment could be more splendid for an artisan!"<sup>72</sup> In this passage, the term "master joiner" (*kōshō*) refers to the head sculptor who supervised the assistant carvers and the overall project.<sup>73</sup> Jōchō most likely played this role in the production of the images for the Hōjōji Yakushi Hall, including the seven monumental Medicine Buddha statues. These images were probably comparable in style to the later Byōdōin Amida, a joined-block statue that Jōchō designed.

When the Shichibutsu Yakushi statues were finally completed in the third month of 1024, they were transported with great ceremony from their original storage place within the Hōjōji compound to the Yakushi Hall. According to *Eiga monogatari*, the completed statues included seven golden Yakushi figures of monumental *jōroku* size. The Medicine Buddhas' attendants, Nikkō and Gakkō, were also *jōroku* images, as were the six Kannon statues installed in the hall.<sup>74</sup> The document does not indicate whether the Medicine Buddhas were standing or seated images, but as "lion thrones" are mentioned, they were probably seated figures. During their transport to the Yakushi Hall, all of the statues were mounted on pairs of carts fitted with large lotus-flower thrones, accompanied by a grand procession of attendants wearing lotus-flower hats and scarlet robes. Distinguished monks also escorted the icons. The scent of priceless incense wafted through the air, as musical instruments—panpipes, flutes, seven-stringed zithers, harps, lutes, gongs, and brass cymbals—produced melodious sounds in harmony. A group of Buddhist monks dressed as bodhisattvas danced, chanting hymns of praise. Attendants scattered multicolored flowers throughout the parade.<sup>75</sup>

Upon reaching the Yakushi Hall, the statues were carried up the steps. The icons were then set

down in a row, extending from the south end of the hall to the north, and facing west (toward the Amida Hall across the lake). The bodhisattvas Nikkō and Gakkō were placed at the north and south ends of the worship hall, flanking the seven Yakushi. Statues of the Twelve Divine Generals, all about seven feet tall and dressed in colorful military attire, were placed intermittently between the Buddhas. *Eiga monogatari* states that the images of the Twelve Divine Generals displayed facial expressions suited to their individual temperaments, and held objects of different kinds in their hands.<sup>76</sup>

The contextual features of the hall's interior were also carefully designed by Michinaga. The pillars and doors were sumptuously decorated; Yakushi's twelve vows were painted on the inner pillars in front of the Medicine Buddhas, and other paintings depicting verses from the *Kannon-kyō* adorned the pillars facing the six Kannon statues.<sup>77</sup> Shimizu surmises that a court painter executed these paintings in the *yamato-e* (literally, "Japanese pictures") style popular at the time. The function of the paintings on the pillars and doors was not purely decorative, however; these images also visually represented noteworthy characteristics of each deity enshrined in the hall. The depiction of the twelve vows of Yakushi served this purpose in the Yakushi Hall, for example, while the Nine Degrees of Rebirth (in Amida's Pure Land) were painted on the doors of the Amida Hall, and the pillars of the Shaka Hall were adorned with scenes from the *Lotus Sutra*.<sup>78</sup>

In undertaking a project as laborious as building a temple complex, Michinaga must have consulted a religious authority in all aspects of the planning and execution. Several likely candidates can be named, all prominent Buddhist priests with whom Michinaga had close ties at the time he was planning to build Hōjōji. These priests included Genshin (942–1017); Kanshū (d. 1008), who had become the abbot of Onjōji (also known as Mii-dera), at the foot of Mt. Hiei, in 997; the archbishop Shōsan (939–1011) of Kannon'in (on the grounds of Daiunji, Kyoto); the archbishop Saijin (954–1030) of Kyoto's Ninnaji; and the Tendai priest Ingen

(954–1028). Even though Genshin, the Tendai monk known for his authorship of the highly influential *Ōjōyōshū* (Teachings Essential for Salvation), is considered by some scholars to have been the source of inspiration for the Muryōjuin, Michinaga only had minimal (if any) contact with him.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, Genshin was probably not directly involved in the building of Hōjōji. Ingen, a Tendai priest mentioned in Michinaga's diary numerous times, is a more likely candidate.<sup>80</sup> In fact, at the dedication ceremony for the Golden Hall, Michinaga awarded Ingen the title of archbishop for his role as chief lecturer. Furthermore, when the seven Medicine Buddha statues were being transported to the Yakushi Hall, it was Ingen who led the procession with Michinaga. The two men stood on either side of the steps when the statues were being carried into the building, suggesting Ingen's prominent position in Michinaga's life at the time. Ingen was even at Michinaga's side at the time of the courtier's death in 1027, and he led the funeral service, having been chosen to officiate from a list of talented monks from prominent monasteries. As a close friend and religious leader, Ingen therefore must have been an important guide for Michinaga in building the Hōjōji complex.

The Yakushi Hall, housing monumental Shichibutsu Yakushi icons, was a sacred space dedicated to the performance of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual. Ten months prior to his death, Michinaga asked the abbot of Mudōji on Mt. Hiei, Keimyō (965–1038), to perform this rite in the hall for his sake.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps Michinaga instinctively sensed the imminent approach of his death, and turned to the Medicine Buddhas one last time for safe passage to Amida's land of bliss. Michinaga later died in his Muryōjuin, holding a braided cord attached to the hands of the Amida statues.<sup>82</sup>

## A MORPHOLOGY OF THE SHICHIBUTSU YAKUSHI RITUAL

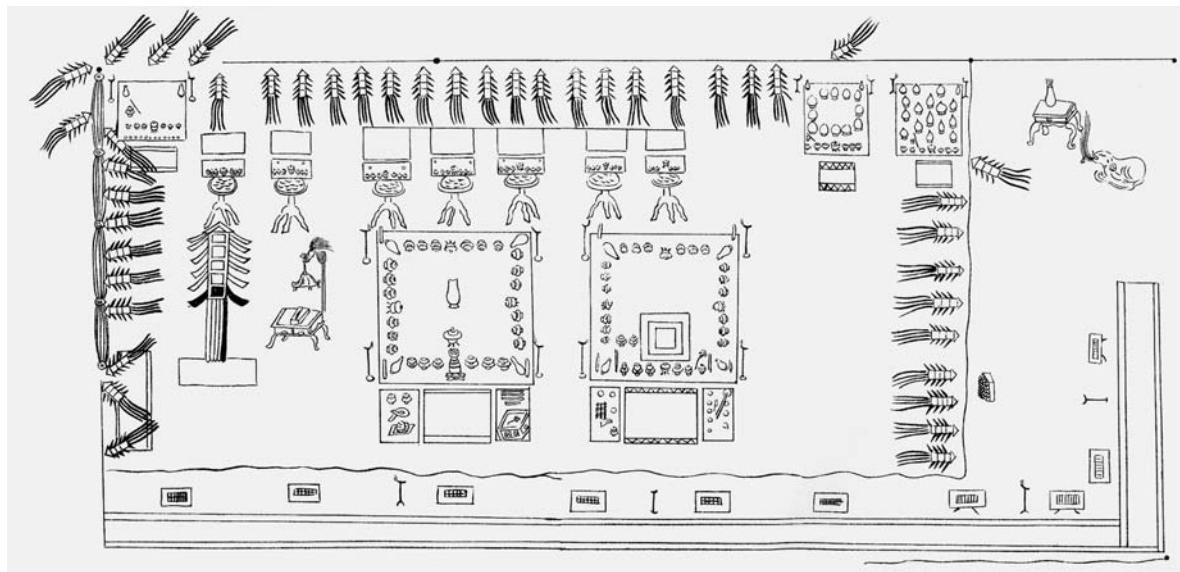
In order to properly contextualize Shichibutsu Yakushi icons in their original ritual setting, the liturgical details of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual

and the spatial arrangement of the ritual sanctuary must be examined. Two medieval documents provide crucial information on the Tendai Shichibutsu Yakushi rite as it was performed in Enryakuji's Central Hall (and elsewhere) in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. One of these sources is the aforementioned ritual compendium *Asabashō*, compiled by the Tendai priest Shōchō (1205–1282). The other is a fourteenth-century document known as *Mon'yōki* (Record of the Gate of Leaves), a collection of various Tendai records from Shōren'in, an important imperial cloister at Enryakuji.<sup>83</sup> The latter document records twenty-four performances of the *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* by the first abbot of Shōren'in, Gyōgen (1097–1155), between 1137 and 1147 for the retired Emperor Toba (r. 1107–1123) and his consorts.

The Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual required an elaborate arrangement of altars set up by Tendai priests. A diagram contained in the chapter of *Asabashō* dedicated to this ritual shows a typical arrangement (fig. 38).<sup>84</sup> Banners (presumably multicolored) are hung all along the inner walls of the worship hall. The seven Medicine Buddha statues (indicated by simple rectangles) are placed in a single line. A small rectangular altar, equipped with an incense burner (*kasha*) and six small bowls (*rokki*), is placed in front of each Yakushi image; a small round table with various offerings is set up in front of each altar. To complete the Esoteric ritual space, the two most important altars, the Great Altar (*dai dan*) and the Fire Altar (*goma dan*), are arranged directly in front of the seven Yakushi icons. The Great Altar is placed before the central Yakushi (Bhaiṣajyaguru), and the Fire Altar (fig. 39) is placed to the right (or south) of this. The Shōten Altar, dedicated to the deity Shōten (S: Vināyaka) is always positioned in the northeast corner (or the upper left corner of the diagram). In the far southeast corner (at upper right) are the remaining two small altars, illustrated as two square platforms: the Yasha (S: Yakṣa) Altar (dedicated to the Twelve Divine Generals), and an altar dedicated to the Twelve Heavenly Deities (Jūniten).

The seven Medicine Buddhas were not the only deities activated in this ritual; as indicated by the various altars, other lesser divinities also played a role in ensuring the efficacy of the rite. One of these deities was Shōten, also known as Kangiten (S: Gaṇapati), a male and female dual form often represented as two figures with human bodies and elephant heads, locked in a tight embrace (fig. 40). Shōten is an ambivalent figure, known to possess terrible powers, and for this reason the deity is almost always kept hidden inside a small shrine.<sup>85</sup> In an Esoteric ritual space, this demonic figure usually occupies the northeast corner, a direction regarded as the inauspicious "demon gate" (*kimon*). Given the proper ritual attention, Shōten is thought to be an efficacious deity for dispelling evil.<sup>86</sup> According to the Yakushi sutras, the Twelve Divine Generals, to whom the Yasha Altar was dedicated, protect the Medicine Buddhas and their worshippers.<sup>87</sup> The sutras explain that each general keeps a retinue of seven thousand *yakṣa*-demons at his command. After hearing the seven Medicine Buddhas preach at an assembly, the Twelve Divine Generals were deeply moved by the teachings, and vowed to aid all beings who circulate the Yakushi sutras, uphold the names of these Buddhas, and venerate and make offerings to them. According to *Yakushi nyorai kōshiki*, a liturgical text purportedly written by Saichō, the Twelve Divine Generals govern the twelve hours of the night and day, and the twelve months.<sup>88</sup> In the ritual diagram in *Asabashō*, the Yasha Altar, the lefthand altar of the two located in the upper right corner, is indicated by a square platform with twelve offerings arranged in a circular fashion. The similar altar to the right of this is a platform dedicated to the Twelve Heavenly Deities.

Visually and iconographically, the Shichibutsu Yakushi icons enshrined in the Central Hall of Enryakuji likely were no different from other Yakushi images. The Kokōkaku figures, for example, are rendered in a manner typical of Heian-period Yakushi images: made of wood, with the right hand of each forming the *abhaya* gesture and the left hand holding a medicine jar. Rather, it was the



38 Diagram of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual space from *Asabashō*. 13th century.

repurposing of multiple Yakushi images in a very specific way, with the proper Esoteric accessories and ritual setup, that transformed the Shichibutsu Yakushi statues into the central icons of the Esoteric Tendai ritual.

As evidenced by the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritu- als recorded in *Mon'yōki*, these rites were often per- formed for a sovereign. An entry for 1143.4.10 notes that the ritual was held at Enryakuji's Central Hall for the retired Emperor Toba, who had ascended Mt. Hiei to participate in this event. The entry gives a brief description of the Shichibutsu Yakushi icons, noting that that they were "old Buddhas" (*kobutsu*). The life-size images were also golden, and their hands formed the *abhaya* and *varada mudrās*.<sup>89</sup> From this passage it is evident that, even though the ceremony was performed in the Central Hall (which already enshrined a set of Shichibutsu Yakushi images), an additional group of Shichi- butsu Yakushi icons was brought in and displayed for this special occasion. Nedachi Kensuke explains that the term *kobutsu* refers to icons that were used in a prior ceremony and then reused because they had some special connection to the patron, and

because they were found to have produced efficacious results in the earlier rite.<sup>90</sup> At an earlier Shichibutsu Yakushi rite performed for Toba in 1141, the retired emperor remarked that the seven standing Medicine Buddha statues used for the ceremony had been used previously by Emperor Shirakawa (r. 1073–1087), and that their ritual efficacy was superior.<sup>91</sup>

The Shichibutsu Yakushi rite was typically held for seven days and seven nights, involving many of- ficiants who performed a prescribed pattern of ritual acts. On the first night, preparations were made for the presentation of offerings to the Medicine Buddhas. The main officiant, called the Great Esoteric Master (J: *dai ajari*; S: *mahā ācārya*), entered the area where the altars were set up, demarcated and surrounded by hanging blinds. Only those offi- ciants designated as Esoteric masters (*ajari*) were allowed to circumambulate inside the blinds, while the rest of the participants (such as musicians and assistant monks) circumambulated outside. In ad- dition to the *dai ajari*, other Esoteric masters were responsible for tending to the remaining altars. As part of their homage to the Buddhas, all of the *ajari*



39 Contemporary fire ritual performed by a *dai ajari* in front of a Fire Altar. Mudōjidani Myōōdō, Mt. Hiei.

circumambulated the images, as well as each Esoteric altar (with the exception of that dedicated to the Jūniten) three times. During this process, musicians played gongs, cymbals, and drums while also circumambulating outside in the corridor.<sup>92</sup>

When a sovereign sponsored and participated in a Shichibutsu Yakushi rite, a prayer offering known as *gokaji* became an integral component of the ceremony.<sup>93</sup> The *gokaji* ritual sequence was incorporated exclusively into Tendai and Shingon Esoteric rites held for an emperor.<sup>94</sup> Many of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Rituals documented in *Mon'yōki* note the inclusion of the *gokaji* sequence, indicating that these events were held for a reigning or retired monarch. When the sovereign himself was present, he was sequestered in private quarters

within the ritual hall, where his body was directly empowered. In a diagram provided in *Mon'yōki* of the space for the aforementioned 1143 ritual, retired Emperor Toba's royal seat, marked as *in gosho* (Honorable Place for the Retired Sovereign) and located to the left of the inner sanctuary, is closed off by some type of partition (fig. 41).<sup>95</sup> When the monarch was not present at the ritual, his imperial robes were presented and empowered instead. A diagram in *Mon'yōki* of the space for the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual held on 1147.6.17 at the Central Hall clearly marks the area (between the Great and Fire Altars) where the imperial robes (*gyoi*) were consecrated (fig. 42).<sup>96</sup> Unfortunately, little detail about *gokaji* is included in *Mon'yōki*, other than the fact that the sequence was performed on the last day of the ritual. Today, a modern version of this procedure, conducted beneath a closed canopy, is performed each year at Enryakuji's Central Hall to appeal for the health of the emperor and the prosperity of the country and its people (fig. 43). It has become one of Enryakuji's most important Esoteric rituals.

One of the highlights of the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite was the Ritual Act of Cord-Tying (*kessen*) performed by the *dai ajari* after the completion of the Proclamation of Intent (*kaibyaku*) ceremony. During the cord-tying ritual, the powers of the Twelve Divine Generals were invoked by the chanting of their incantation while five cords of different colors, set at the ritual table, were empowered forty-nine times by a *vajra* (J: *kongō*; an Esoteric ritual implement). Next, the five cords were woven together into a single cord. The five colors symbolized the five directions (and the demon associated with each), and the tying of the cords was thought to create stability at insecure places. After the Rite of True Recitation (*shōnenju*) was performed, the woven cord was returned to the small ritual table, where the *dai ajari* proceeded to knot it forty-nine times (usually over the course of three days) while holding it over the fumes rising from the incense burner.<sup>97</sup> The efficacy of the knotted cord is clearly explained in the *Shichibutsu Yakushi Sutra*: "Those who seek release from the distress of illness should

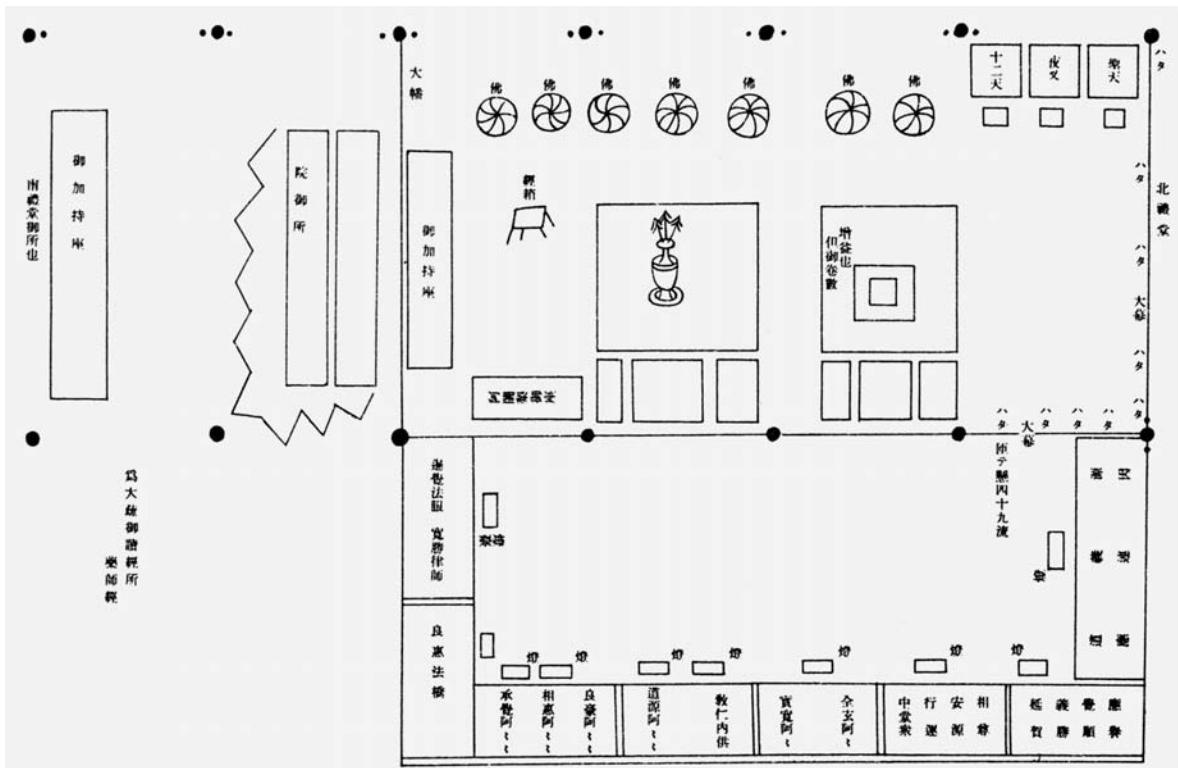


40 *Kanyiten (Shōten)*. Date unknown. Wood, single-block construction. H. 18 cm. Musée national des arts asiatiques Guimet, Paris.

also read and recite this sutra. They should take a five-colored rope and knot our names [the names of the Jūni Shinshō], untying the knots when their wishes are fulfilled.”<sup>98</sup>

A talented Esoteric master was believed to possess the ability to manipulate the various deities by controlling their names. This practice and belief can be found, for example, in the fourteenth-century *Ishiyamadera engi* illustrated handscroll,

which contains a scene that depicts the Shingon monk Rekikai performing a rain-making ritual and reciting the names of the rain-making deities. He succeeds in enticing the Dragon King and his servants to appear before him, subdued and ready to grant his wishes.<sup>99</sup> The cord-tying ritual thus comprised a core part of the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite, as it invoked the vow made by the Twelve Divine Generals to fulfill the wishes of a devotee when



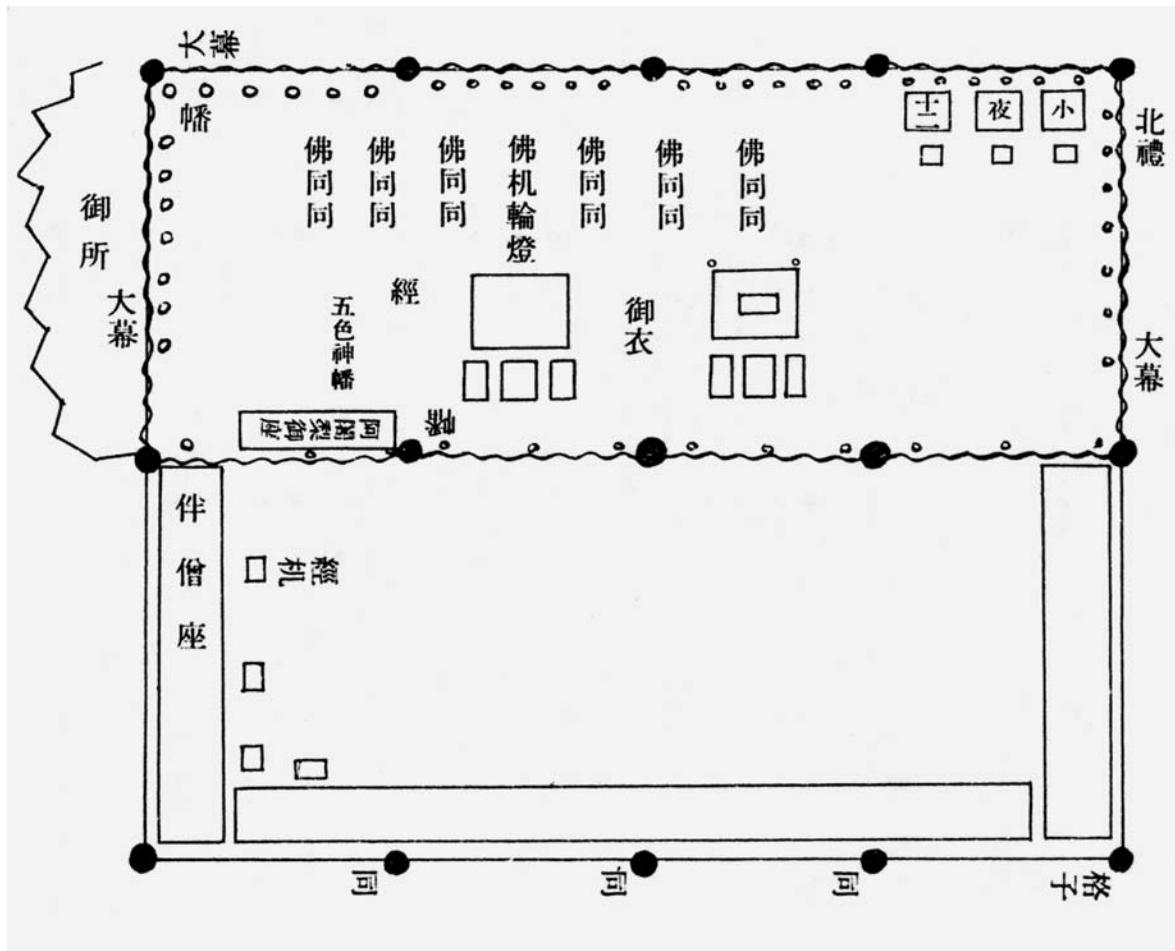
41 Diagram of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual space from *Mon'yōki*. Entry for Kōji 2 (1143).4.10.

each of their names was called out as knots were tied into a five-colored cord. The knotted cord was then presented to the ritual sponsor.

Once these wishes were fulfilled, the knots had to be untied in order to release the spirits thus invoked and bound.<sup>100</sup> A commentary in *Asabashō* states that, even if the wishes were not fulfilled, the knots were still untied in order to prevent misfortune from striking the devotee. This belief is apparent in another commentary, which tells the story of a Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual performed by the monk Kakujin (1012–1081) of Enryakuji's Kongōjuin for the retired Emperor Go-Sanjō (r. 1068–1073). Shortly after the rite, Go-Sanjō had a dream in which twelve warriors appeared before him and begged him to free them. When Go-Sanjō inquired who they were, they replied, "The abbot of Mt. Hiei came to us and ordered us to protect you." After the

retired monarch recounted his dream to Kakujin, the monk explained, "This happened because I did not untie the knots," upon which he duly untied them. After the strange apparitions appeared in Go-Sanjō's dream a second time, the priest commanded them to disperse, and the warriors finally disappeared.<sup>101</sup> Such was the power credited to the cord-tying ritual, an integral part of the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite, that even deities were controlled by it until ritually released. It is thus not surprising that the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual was embraced by the elite—and promoted by Enryakuji—in the latter half of the Heian period.

Although the performance of Yakushi *keka* waned after the ninth century, the cult of Yakushi retained its popularity among the Heian aristocracy with the Tendai school's introduction of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual. In this newer



42 Diagram of the Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual space from *Mon'yōki*. Entry for Kyūan 3 (1147).6.17.

Esoteric Tendai ritual, Yakushi played a multifaceted role.

A set of wood Shichibutsu Yakushi icons was enshrined in Enryakuji's Central Hall sometime during the Heian period. Although these images were destroyed by fire in the fifteenth century, the Shichibutsu Yakushi statues at Matsumushidera and Kokōkaku have inherited their iconographical and ritual legacy. Tendai documents such as *Mon'yōki* and *Asabashō* are valuable sources for illuminating how these icons functioned in a new kind of Esoteric ritual setting. The Shichibutsu Yakushi Ritual entailed a series of complex proce-

dures utilizing a set of seven Yakushi icons. The ceremony's full potency and efficacy was realized by an experienced ritual master who could activate the powers of not only the principal icons, but also those in the periphery, such as the darker forces of Shōten and the Twelve Divine Generals.

Among elite women, the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite was extremely popular because it was believed to ease childbirth, ensuring the safety of both mother and newborn. Other aristocrats, such as Fujiwara no Michinaga, were devoted to worshiping the seven Yakushi in the hopes that these Medicine Buddhas would guarantee safe passage



43 Contemporary ritual for the consecration of the imperial robes (*gyoi kaji mishihō*) performed at the Central Hall, Enryakuji, Mt. Hiei.

to Amida's Western Pure Land. Unlike the earlier *keka* rituals, however, the Shichibutsu Yakushi rite remained a private practice reserved exclusively for the elite, performed by Tendai ecclesiastics for their courtly patrons. Practice of the Shichibutsu

Yakushi rite never spread to the lower echelons of society, which explains why so few icons remain extant. Nevertheless, the icons that have endured convey the long legacy of the Enryakuji Central Hall tradition.



# Epilogue

THE IMMEDIATE AIM of this book has been to discover when and how the cult of the Medicine Buddha, a belief system widely accepted throughout East Asia, became a distinctive Japanese religious phenomenon (*Yakushi shinkō*). Underlying this entire study is the premise that icons played a key role in this complex process, especially in the widespread reception of the devotional cult throughout Japan.

The dissemination of the Yakushi cult can be seen to fit the model of what the archaeologist Carl Knappett has called “nodes of networks” involving both humans and objects.<sup>1</sup> Yakushi icons should be viewed as nodes in a wider socio-religious network, in which “idea, behavior and artifact are codependent” and “agency is widely distributed and inheres in the relationships between the various entities that constitute a field of action.”<sup>2</sup> During the early Heian period, the cult of Yakushi was propagated by the court’s sponsorship of Yakushi repentance rituals (*Yakushi keka*), both at major monasteries enshrining Yakushi icons and at the provincial monasteries (*kokubunji*) established by the state. The cult was also popularized by way of another socio-religious network—that of itinerant priests who travelled long distances to establish private temples in faraway provinces for the benefit of the local populations.

The Tendai school and its priests were key players in the spread of Yakushi worship throughout the Japanese archipelago, more so than any other school of Japanese Buddhism. Saichō’s personal faith and endorsement of Yakushi, along with his installation of a standing, wood Yakushi statue in his humble hermitage on Mt. Hiei, greatly enhanced the popularity of the deity. Even after this hermitage developed into the great Enryakuji

monastic complex, Saichō’s Yakushi icon continued to be the principal cult image of the monastery’s Central Hall.

Interestingly, Yakushi originally did not play any major part in Tendai doctrine or philosophy. The Medicine Buddha does not appear in the *Lotus Sutra*, the key scripture that forms the foundation of the school’s teachings. It is therefore worth noting that many of the Yakushi icons (particularly those in the standing pose) from the Heian period with verifiable provenance were made by Tendai affiliates, who created a specifically Japanese Tendai idiom. In fact, the Tendai religious community promoted and legitimized its religious authority through the replication of Saichō’s standing, wood Yakushi icon.<sup>3</sup> This replication began with the making of two copies fashioned after the original and enshrined with it in Enryakuji’s Central Hall. These Yakushi statues were not only efficacious cult images, but were also meant to memorialize Saichō. Long after the death of the Tendai founder, his memory continued to be actively propagated by Tendai monks, and also by the Yakushi icons themselves, all part of the Tendai socio-religious network.

In addition to reconsidering Yakushi worship as paradigmatic of Heian religious and artistic culture, this book has also asserted the polysemous nature of the cult of Yakushi, arguing that it reflected an essential element of Japanese religiosity: *genze riyaku*, the pursuit and securing of practical benefits by supplication to a deity. This concept is not time-bound, but is a fundamental characteristic of Japanese religious practice, even in contemporary times. As demonstrated in these pages, the iconic worship of Yakushi was highly compatible with *genze riyaku*; Yakushi images, as embodiments of the “Medicine Master,” were enshrined in temples and used in ritual performances in order to activate their powers of healing. Eventually, Yakushi icons were believed to possess miraculous powers that

Detail of Yakushi *kebutsu* on the mandorla, *Seated Yakushi*. Kokusekiji, detail of fig. 10a.

went far beyond curing individuals. Through ritual performances (whether Yakushi *keka* or the Esoteric rite of the seven Medicine Buddhas), the magical powers of the icons were unleashed by the officiants. These powers could provide many benefits to devotees, from pacifying angry spirits, suppressing epidemics and natural disasters, and ensuring safe childbirth, to guiding worshippers upon death to Amida's Western Pure Land.

Although the connections between Saichō, the Tendai school, and the standing Yakushi image have been relegated to the arcane knowledge of the past, Yakushi icons remain objects of popular faith among the Japanese. Like other prominent Buddhist deities such as Jizō and Kannon, Yakushi is often assimilated with local folk practices, ensuring the popularity of this deity even now. Today, the Tako (Octopus) Yakushi at Eifukuji (Temple of

Eternal Fortune) is popular among Kyoto locals as an efficacious *genze riyaku* deity. It is also a standing icon of the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage, although its significance as such is not widely known. I accidentally discovered this standing Yakushi icon at the tiny temple, nestled snugly among the storefronts along Kyoto's busy shopping street, Shin Kyōgoku-dōri. Camouflaged among pachinko parlors, fast-food venues, and traditional craft shops, Eifukuji might be easily overlooked if not for the hanging paper lanterns decorating its modest wooden entryway (fig. 44). These lanterns, inscribed in black with "Tako Yakushi Nyorai," hang in rows at the top of the gate; red banners inscribed in white with "Hail to the Buddha Yakushi" (*Namu Yakushi*) are placed at eye level to attract the visitor's attention. The temple's main worship hall stands just a few feet inside the gate. A small statue of Yakushi is



44 Entryway of Eifukuji, Kyoto. Photograph by the author.



45 Main altar of Eifukuji. Photograph by the author.

installed in the rear center of the main altar among random Buddhist paraphernalia displayed in a haphazard manner (fig. 45). Two large wooden plaques, one on each side of the altar, boldly advertise the merits of worshipping the Octopus Yakushi icon: “cure of various illnesses” (*shobyō heiyu*), “health of mind and body” (*shinshin kenzen*), “removal of misfortunes and troubles” (*yakunan genjo*), and “fulfillment of various wishes” (*shogan jōju*).

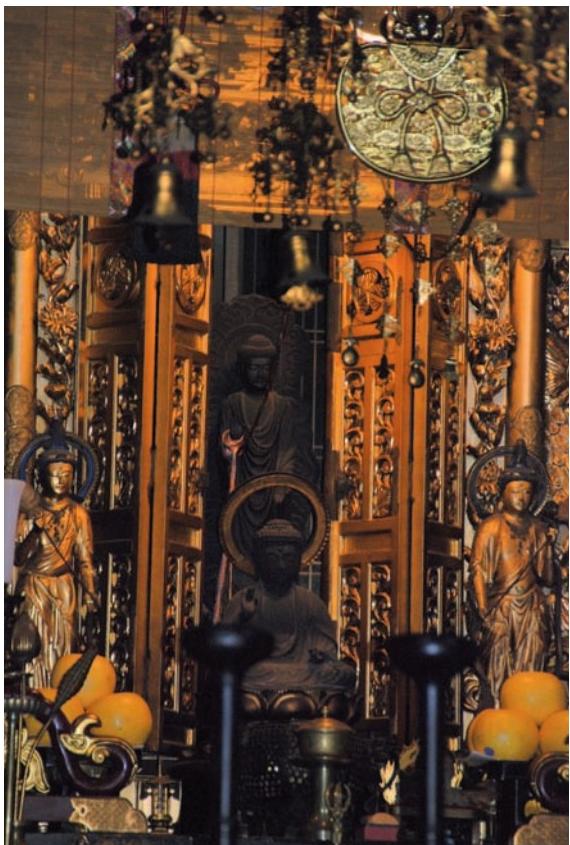
The standing wood Yakushi on Eifukuji’s main altar is in fact a stand-in (*omaedachi*) for a secret stone Yakushi icon hidden behind it. The abbot explained to me that this wooden stand-in was a personal icon of worship that had once belonged to the mother of the first Tokugawa shogun, Ieyasu (1543–1616). Wrapped around the raised right hand of the icon is a five-colored cord, which extends up to the ceiling and then down again to the center section of the altar. Worshippers who have requested prayer services (*kitō*) can sit in this area clutching the silk cord, thereby establishing a special karmic bond with the deity during the service (fig. 46).

Eifukuji’s Yakushi images not only boast an extraordinary provenance and reputation for efficacy, but are associated with two unrelated sacred narratives, enhancing their spiritual powers as true *genze riyaku* icons. The first of these narratives firmly places the secret stone icon within the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage. According to the tem-

ple’s *engi*, retold in a pamphlet at the site, Eifukuji was originally established in 1181 by a rich man who lived in the Muromachi district of Kyoto. This man had been a devoted worshipper of the Yakushi icon enshrined in Enryakuji’s Central Hall (i.e., Saichō’s Yakushi image). Every month, the pious man made a pilgrimage to Enryakuji to pay his respects to this icon. Eventually, knowing that he was becoming too old and weak to make this monthly journey, he prayed to the Yakushi icon to bestow upon him a replication of itself, which the man could bring back to worship in his own home. After making his wish, the devout man descended Mt. Hiei. That night, he dreamt of the Enryakuji Yakushi appearing before him, directing him to a certain place on Mt. Hiei where a stone Yakushi statue was secretly buried. The dream icon explained that this statue was carved by none other than Saichō himself. When the man dug in the place instructed by Yakushi the next day, he was overjoyed to discover a stone Yakushi icon that emitted a wondrous light. The man took the image home, built a six-by-four-bay worship hall for it, and named the temple Eifukuji.<sup>4</sup>

This legendary account calls to mind Robert Sharf’s observation that “the divine nature of an icon denotes the ability to partake or share in the very nature of the divine. They are ‘animated’ through ritual, liturgy as well as narrative and myth.”<sup>5</sup> The Eifukuji Yakushi’s story wonderfully illustrates how, throughout the medieval period, Saichō’s standing Yakushi statue in the Central Hall was considered a miraculous icon whose efficacies could be reproduced through both material copies and sacred narratives. In rewarding the rich man’s piety, the Enryakuji Central Hall Yakushi provided him with another incarnation of itself, a standing stone image carved by Saichō. The Eifukuji Yakushi statue thus derived its spiritual power through its direct association with Saichō and the Central Hall icon, an association contained and preserved in the sacred story recounted by the temple.

It must also be emphasized that, rather than developing an affinity for some idealized spiritual



46 Close-up view of main altar, Eifukuji. Photograph by the author.

concept of Yakushi expounded in the sutras, people bonded with the deity's material counterparts. The power and mystery of the replicated icon lay in the fact that, even though the image attained its spiritual authority from its intentional resemblance to the prototype, the copy also had the propensity to take on a life of its own.

In *Lives of Indian Images*, Richard Davis makes the salient point that an icon is constantly relocated, reframed, and reinterpreted by the people with whom it comes into contact.<sup>6</sup> The second sacred narrative associated with Eifukuji's Yakushi image reveals the complex phenomena through which this replicated icon was further transformed. This miracle tale relates that a Buddhist priest named Zenkō lived at Eifukuji during the Kenchō era

(1249–1256). One day, Zenkō's mother fell gravely ill. She told her son that she might recover if she could eat some octopus. Being a Buddhist monk, Zenkō was not allowed to consume living things, but he decided to break his vows for the sake of his mother. Some of the townspeople witnessed Zenkō purchasing an octopus from a fisherman and reproached him. When Zenkō prayed to Yakushi for help, the octopus transformed itself into a set of eight sutra scrolls, which emitted a wondrous light in all directions. The townspeople who had criticized Zenkō all sang praises and pressed their hands together in prayer to the Buddha Yakushi. When they called upon Yakushi's name, the scrolls miraculously transformed back into the octopus, which jumped into the temple pond; the octopus then turned into Yakushi, who emitted an azure light the color of lapis lazuli. When this light struck Zenkō's mother, she was immediately healed of her illness. From then on, Eifukuji came to be known as the temple of the Octopus Yakushi. People came to worship the particular Yakushi icon at the temple in order to be healed from illness, to bear children, and to eliminate problems and difficulties of all kinds.<sup>7</sup>

This tale charmingly and humorously denotes Yakushi's role as a deity who bestows all kinds of worldly benefits on the pious. The origin of the association of this Yakushi icon with an octopus, however, is uncertain. According to the temple pamphlet, the name "Tako Yakushi" may have been derived from the fact that a pond (*taku*) was present on the original Eifukuji site.<sup>8</sup> The phonetic sound of *taku* eventually may have been transmuted to *tako*, bringing forth the legend of an Octopus Yakushi. Regardless of their derivation, the two miracle stories from Eifukuji together demonstrate the centrality of Buddhist icon veneration for the Japanese, as well as the power of sacred narratives to animate such icons with life and authority just as effectively as ritual and scripture.<sup>9</sup>

The extraordinary transmutability of the Buddha Yakushi has resulted in a great many Yakushi icons with colorful stories that enhance their reputations. Yakushi's adaptability in merging with

local or regional practices and beliefs is what makes this Buddha so pervasive in Japanese religious life through the centuries. As Sharf further notes,

Japanese Buddhist images were frequently treated, by elite monastics and unschooled laypersons alike, as more than mere didactic symbols, representations, or commemorations of divine figures or saints. Japanese Buddhist icons were regarded, more often than not, as living presences with considerable apotropaic and salvific power. This conclusion is simply inescapable: it is reiterated in historical documents, in liturgical and

ritual materials, in biographies, hagiographies, and mythology, and is fully countenanced by scripture and commentary.<sup>10</sup>

A worshipper's devotion to Yakushi, therefore, is not based on any doctrinal logic expounded by the sutras, but operates on the rationale that faith in this Buddha may lead to all kinds of worldly and spiritual benefits. The material object—the Yakushi image—is the potent intermediary that enables the successful interaction between the earthly and the divine.

# Appendix

## The Founding of Jingōji

What follows is a translation of the passage from *Ruijū kokushi* describing the circumstances of the establishment of Jingōji. The text used was *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 180 (Buddhist marga 7, “Temples”), in *Kokushi taikei*, vol. 6, 259–60. Numbers preceding each passage indicate lines of the Japanese text.

1. The heavenly sovereign Junna, in the first year of Tenchō [824], ninth moon, senior water day of the monkey [twenty-seventh day], designated Takaodera as an endowed temple (*jōgakujī*) and determined its *tokudo kyōgō* [ordinands, scriptures and ceremonies]. Wake no Matsuna, Senior Fifth Rank, Lower Grade, Governor of Kawachi Province,
2. and Wake no Nakayo, Junior Fifth Rank, Lower Grade, Junior Clerk of the Board of Censors, spoke. We heard, “The father builds it [Jinganji] and the sons complete it. This is called ‘great filial piety.’ To manage public affairs and serve the good is called the ‘highest loyalty.’ Consider loyalty. Consider filial piety. How could anyone fail to conform to [these ideals]? ”
3. Long ago, during the Jingo keiun era [767–770], the monk Dōkyō used his skills of flattery and deception<sup>1</sup> and ascended to the top of Mount Genkō,<sup>2</sup> dis-  
gracefully usurping the title of Dharma King. In the end, harboring thoughts of misplaced desires, he distributed improper offerings to the gathering of gods
4. and schemed with his fawning clique. In regard to this, the great god Hachiman was pained by the weakening of the heavenly succession, and greatly resented this evil ruffian’s ascendance to power. The divine troops sharpened their spears and fought continuously for many years. Their [forces] were numerous, our [forces] were scant; the wicked were strong and the righteous weak.<sup>3</sup>

5. The great god bemoaned the fact that his own powers were ineffective. He called upon the powers of the Buddhas for miraculous protection. In [Empress Shōtoku’s] dream, he asked for a messenger. [Shōtoku] gave a royal proclamation. The ministers summoned Wake no Kiyomaro of Junior Third Rank, Minister of Popular Affairs,
6. and personally informed him of the dream’s content. With regard to the conferral of the heavenly position upon Dōkyō, [Shōtoku] ordered [Kiyomaro] to speak to the great god. Having received the royal order, Kiyomaro headed for Usa Hachiman, at which time the great god gave an oracle: Gods are both greater and lesser, and their likes and dislikes
7. are not the same. Good gods dislike transgressive rituals and greedy gods [like to] receive improper offerings. [As Hachiman said,] “I will exalt the royal lineage and help the realm. You shall copy the collected scriptures and make a Buddha image. Recite the *Golden Illuminating Wisdom Sutra* ten thousand times.<sup>4</sup> Build a temple.
8. These actions will eliminate the inauspicious improprieties in one day, and secure the deities for ten thousand generations. You [Kiyomaro] convey these words [of mine] and do not allow them to be forgotten.” Kiyomaro replied to the god, avowing, “After the kingdom is at peace, I will present [your words] to the next ruler
9. and fulfill your vow, even if my bones turn to powder and I suffer death. I will not betray the god’s words.” Upon returning, [Kiyomaro] presented these words. [But] the time was not right. He was stripped of his rank and punished by imprisonment. Then he was banished to the wilderness. Fortunately, through the god’s powers, he returned to the capital, and during the reign of Go-tahara tennō<sup>5</sup> [Emperor Kōnin] in Hōki 11 [780],

10. he presented this matter to the sovereign several times. The sovereign gasped [with joy]. He personally wrote out the royal proclamation. But before the action could be performed, he abdicated his position.<sup>6</sup> Kiyomaro petitioned again in the second year of Ten'ō [782]. The former sovereign Kashiwabara [Emperor Kanmu]
11. took the previous petition and publicized it throughout the realm. Finally during the Enryaku era [782–806], a private temple was built called Jinganji. The sovereign [Kanmu] praised Kiyomaro for his good services, officially named [the temple] "Jinganji," and made it a certified temple.
12. Presently, the topographical features of the temple land are dirty and defiled (*owai*) and [the temple] cannot [be used] as a ritual hall. We [Wake no Matsuna and Nakayo] humbly request that in lieu of [Jinganji], Takaosanji be designated an endowed temple. It will be named Jin-gokoku-so-Shingon-ji [Divinely Protecting the Realm, Blessed with True Words Temple]. [With] one Buddha image, and by means of the one Great Compassion Womb and Diamond World [mandala pair],
13. seventeen monks who understand mantras will be appointed to practice the Three Mysteries (*sanmitsu hōmon*) in perpetuity on behalf of the kingdom. If there is a vacancy, select a practicing monk and appoint him. In addition, twenty-seven newly ordained monks of rectitude
14. shall be appointed to recite the *Sutra of Humane Kings*, to protect the kingdom's borders, as well as to pray for the regulation of the winds and rain, and the ripening of the five crops. These sutras will be recited in turn during the day and night without interruption. Seven years later we predict the following accomplishments:
15. One, the fulfillment of the great god's vow; and two, the elimination of calamities from the country within our lifetimes.
16. [The emperor] decreed, "Every year one novice shall be appointed, and in the land of Bizen, twenty *chō* of rice fields will be awarded for two generations as merit fields for good service. If this temple sufficiently carries out the god's vow, this can be extended for another two generations; the rest, according to request."<sup>7</sup>

# Endnotes

## Prologue

- 1 Joseph H. Fichter, *Religion and Pain* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1981), 19.
- 2 Raoul Birnbaum, *The Healing Buddha* (Boulder, CO: Shambhala, 1989), 8.
- 3 Ibid., 3.
- 4 On *genze riyaku* as an intrinsic element of Japanese religion, see Ian Reader and George J. Tanabe, Jr., *Practically Religious: Worldly Benefits and the Common Religion of Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998).
- 5 Ibid., 2. Reader and Tanabe’s study of *genze riyaku* offers a new theoretical framework for approaching the study of Japanese religion, one that attempts to transcend categorical divides between various religious traditions (Shinto, Buddhist, Confucian, Daoist) and between various Buddhist schools (such as Shingon, Tendai, and Jōdo). It has also enabled scholars to move and think beyond the more problematic divisions implied by the terms high, elite, folk, and popular religion.
- 6 Ibid., 8.
- 7 See, for example, Nara Rokudaiji Taikan Kankōkai, ed., *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, vol. 2, *Hōryūji*, and vol. 6, *Yakushiji* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1968–1973).
- 8 Penelope Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, revised by Donald Dinwiddie (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2005), 132–33, 137–38.
- 9 Gorai Shigeru, ed., *Yakushi shinkō*, Minshū shūkyōshi sōsho, vol. 12 (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1986); Nishio Masa-hito, *Yakushi shinkō: gokoku no hotoke kara onsen no hotoke e* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2000).
- 10 Robert H. Sharf and Elizabeth Horton Sharf, eds., *Living Images: Japanese Buddhist Icons in Context* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 3.
- 11 *Oxford Dictionary of English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 For a detailed discussion of the “Buddhist icon,” see Donald F. McCallum, *Zenkōji and its Icon: A Study of Medieval Japanese Religious Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Bernard Faure, “The Buddhist Icon and the Modern Gaze,” *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 3 (1998): 768–813; and Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, 15.
- 14 Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, 15.
- 15 For the idea of objects as active agents and socially animated entities, see Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1986); Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press; New York: Clarendon Press, 1998); and Carl Knappett, “Photographs, Skeuomorphs and Marionettes: Some Thoughts on Mind, Agency and Object,” *Journal of Material Culture* 7, no. 1 (2002): 97–116.

- 16 Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*,” *Representations*, no. 26 (Spring 1989): 7–24.

- 17 “Precisely defined prototype” is a term used by Donald McCallum to explain the phenomenon of replication seen with the Zenkōji Amida triad and Seiryōji Shaka icons. McCallum, *Zenkōji and its Icon*, 6.

## Chapter 1

- 1 Itō Shirō, “Yakushi nyoraizō,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 242 (July 1986): 24.
- 2 Nagai Shin’ichi, “Chūgoku no Yakushizō,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 159 (1985): 54–55.
- 3 See, for example, Hwang Su-yōng, *Pulsang*, vol. 5 of *Han’guk misul chōnjip* (Seoul: Tonghwa Ch’ulp’ansa, 1973), plate 23, for an extant Three Kingdoms image.
- 4 On Buddhist scriptures brought into Japan, see Ishida Mosaku, *Shakyō yori mitaru Narachō bukkyō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Tōyō Bunko, 1930; reprint, Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 1982). Although the earliest extant Yakushi sutra in Japan is dated to 731, the *Nihon shoki* entry for 686.5.24 relates the recitation of a Yakushi sutra at Kawaradera (discussed in the next section of this chapter).
- 5 The other main sutra on Yakushi is the *Yaoshi rulai benyuan jing*, translated by Dharmagupta (d. 619) in 615; see Takakusu Junjirō, Watanabe Kaigyouku, et al., eds., *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (hereafter abbreviated as *T*), vol. 14, sutra no. 449 (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1932). *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing*, *T* 14:450; *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo benyuan gongde jing*, *T* 14:451. The translation attributed to Śrīmitra (317–322) is not considered here because it is not an independent text, but rather the last chapter of a collection known as the *Abhiṣeka* sutras (*T* 21:1331); furthermore, its authenticity is questionable. The same goes for an abridged version, composed by Hui Jian in 457, of a translation from the Liu Song dynasty (420–479) (*T* 50:2145, 39a). Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 56. See also Alexander C. Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China* (Ascona, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae Publishers, 1959), 170–71.
- 6 For all titles I refer to Raoul Birnbaum’s translations in his *Healing Buddha*.

- <sup>7</sup> Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 59–60. Birnbaum notes that versions similar to Xuanzang's text had been written in Central Asian languages, including Sogdian and Khotanese. A Tibetan translation from the ninth century and a Mongolian version of the Xuanzang text also exist. The Sanskrit versions, according to Birnbaum, were written in a way that suggests Central Asian or northwest Indian authorship, and thus he believes that the cult first developed in Central Asia, rather than in India.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., 61.
- <sup>9</sup> Soper, *Literary Evidence for Early Buddhist Art in China*, 172.
- <sup>10</sup> Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 62.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., 166.
- <sup>13</sup> This sutra most likely arrived in Japan not long after it was translated in China, as several Japanese priests went to study there, returning in the early eighth century with many newly translated texts. See Ishida, *Narachō bukkyō no kenkyū*.
- <sup>14</sup> Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 70.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., 93. Translations of these Buddhas' names are my own.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid., 92.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., 72.
- <sup>18</sup> Ryūichi Abé, *The Weaving of Mantra: Kūkai and the Establishment of Esoteric Buddhist Discourse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 164.
- <sup>19</sup> Richard McBride, "Is There Really 'Esoteric' Buddhism?," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 27, no. 2 (2004): 323–50.
- <sup>20</sup> Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 160.
- <sup>21</sup> Marinus Willem de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan: Sutras and Ceremonies in Use in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries A.D. and Their History in Later Times*, vol. 2 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1935; reprint, Mansfield Center, CT: Martino Publishing, 2006), 436.
- <sup>22</sup> Other sutras used to invoke defense and well-being on a national level included the *Dai hannya-kyō* (*Sutra of Great Wisdom*) and the *Hoke-kyō* (*Lotus Sutra*).
- <sup>23</sup> This is the first mention of the sutra in *Nihon shoki*. See *Nihon shoki*, Book 29, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 68, ed. Sakamoto Tarō et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957–1967), 477. See also W.G. Aston, trans., *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, vol. 1 (Rutland, VT: Charles Tuttle, 1972), 398. All references to the W.G. Aston translation are abbreviated as "A."
- <sup>24</sup> Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 169.
- <sup>25</sup> *Shoku Nihongi*. All references are to the Iwanami Shoten edition, abbreviated as "Aoki." Entry for Yōrō 4 (720).8.2, *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 2, 77; entry for Tenpyō 16 (744).12.4, Aoki, vol. 2, 451.
- <sup>26</sup> Emperor Tenmu underscored the role of the emperor as chief priest of all shrines, and promoted Ise Jingū, the ancestral shrine of the imperial family, to the top of the hierarchy. The most recent scholarship on Tenmu's reign has also revealed the sovereign's great interest in and manipulation of Daoist symbols and practices to enhance his political authority. Herman Ooms, *Imperial Politics and Symbolics in Ancient Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009).
- <sup>27</sup> This temple was first established as Kurara Ōdera, then moved to Takechi at the beginning of Tenmu's reign (becoming Takechi Ōdera); it subsequently was renamed Daikandaiji (Great Official Great Temple) in 677. Donald F. McCallum, *The Four Great Temples: Buddhist Archaeology, Architecture, and Icons of Seventh-Century Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 141–42.
- <sup>28</sup> Entry for Tenmu 9 (680).11.12, *Nihon shoki*, A, 348; in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 68, 444.
- <sup>29</sup> McCallum, *Four Great Temples*, 208.
- <sup>30</sup> See Itō, "Yakushi nyorai-zō," plate 34, for a photograph of the image. See also McCallum, *Four Great Temples*, 233; Nabunken, ed., *Yamato Yamada-dera ato* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2002), 6–18; Shinokawa Ken, "Itsushi no hen to Soga Kurayamada Ishikawa Maro," in *Nihon kodai seiji shi ronkō*, ed. Saeki Arikiyo (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1983), 59–84; and Kuno Takeshi, "Kōfukujii no buttō," in *Hakuhō no bijutsu* (Tokyo: Rokkō Shuppan, 1978), 65–80.
- <sup>31</sup> McCallum, *Four Great Temples*, 233.
- <sup>32</sup> Ueno Kunikazu, "Tennō no tera, gōzoku no tera: Kawaradera to Yamadadera," in *Kodai o kangaeru kodai jin*, ed. Kanō Hisashi (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1999), 110.
- <sup>33</sup> Kuno, "Kōfukujii no buttō"; Adachi Kō, "Setsurin/Ishikawa Maro tsuifuku no butsuzō," *Shigaku zasshi* 46-2, no. 543 (1935): 231–40, reprinted in Adachi Kō, *Nihon chōkokushō no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Ryūginsha, 1944), 101–13.
- <sup>34</sup> Fujiwarakyō, located in present-day Kashihara in Nara Prefecture, was the capital for only sixteen years, from 694 to 710.
- <sup>35</sup> McCallum, *Four Great Temples*, 209–10. Entry for Jitō 2 (688).1.8, *Nihon shoki*, A, 387; in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 68, 490–91.
- <sup>36</sup> McCallum, *Four Great Temples*, 232–33.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid., 207. It should be noted here that the extant Yakushiji Yakushi triad dates from the Nara period. Although the question of whether this triad was the one made in Fujiwarakyō or another dating from after the temple was transferred to Nara in 710 was debated in the past, most scholars today are of the latter opinion, and believe that the extant images were made probably just after the Yōrō era (717–724). See McCallum, *Four Great Temples*, 9.

- 38 For a photograph of the Hōryūji Yakushi, see Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, 72, fig. 85.
- 39 J. Edward Kidder, “Yakushi, Shaka, the 747 Inventory, and the Cult of Prince Shōtoku,” in *Hōryūji Reconsidered*, ed. Dorothy C. Wong (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), 99–129. See also *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, vol. 2, *Hōryūji*, 32.
- 40 This temple was also known as Wakakusadera.
- 41 On Soga patronage of Buddhism during the Asuka period, see Donald F. McCullum, “Tori-busshi and the Production of Buddhist Icons in Asuka-Period Japan,” in *The Artist as Professional in Japan*, ed. Melinda Takeuchi (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 17–37.
- 42 Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, 73.
- 43 This account is found in *Shōtoku taishi den shiki*, citing a passage from *Miidera Kanrokujike shizai zōmotsu tōji*. See Machida Kōichi, “Hōrinji,” in *Yamato koji taikan*, ed. Ōta Hirotarō et al., vol. 1, *Hokkiji, Hōrinji, Chūgūji* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1977), 29.
- 44 This account is also recorded in *Jōgū Shōtoku Taishi den hoketsuki*. See Machida, “Hōrinji,” 29.
- 45 Tanabe Saburōsuke, “Yakushi nyorai zazō,” in *Yamato koji taikan*, vol. 1, 39. See also Mizuno Seiichi, *Asuka Buddhist Art: Horyu-ji*, trans. Richard L. Gage (New York/Tokyo: Weatherhill/Heibonsha, 1974), 85–87.
- 46 These traits are found, for example, on the small gilt-bronze Buddha icon (no. 147) in the Tokyo National Museum.
- 47 Japanese priests who studied in China and brought back new forms of Buddhism include the master Dōji (675–744) of the Sanron sect, who studied in China for sixteen years and returned to Japan in 718; and Genbō from Kōfukuji, who also spent sixteen years there and returned in 734 with five thousand fascicles of Buddhist scriptures. Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 152.
- 48 As noted above, a major Buddhist ceremony, the *musha dai-e*, was held at Yakushiji on 688.1.8. As Donald McCullum observes, “Given that, at a minimum, a golden hall and a main icon would be necessary for a proper ritual, it seems plausible to assume that at least these components were available by early 688.” McCullum, *Four Great Temples*, 210.
- 49 *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 1, 12–13.
- 50 Im Namsu, “Kondō Yakushi sanzon zō,” in *Yakushiji, sensanbyakunen no seika: Bijutsushi kenkyū no ayumi*, ed. Ōhashi Katsuaki and Matsubara Satomi (Tokyo: Ribun Shuppan, 2000); Kuno Takeshi and Inoue Tadashi, “Study of the Yakushiji Triad in the Kondō, Yakushiji,” *Acta Asiatica* 1 (1960): 89–108.
- 51 Recent archaeological excavations have shown that Yakushiji in Fujiwarakyō continued to function during the Nara period, even with the establishment of Nara Yakushiji. This discovery has significantly strengthened the probability that the extant Yakushi triad was newly made in Nara. Hanatani Hiroshi, “Moto Yakushiji no hakkutsu chōsa,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 25 (November 1997): 57–79.
- 52 Considerable variations are found among the texts as to the thirty-two markings, but the most commonly quoted source is *Daichi do ron* (C: *Dazhi du lun*), a commentary on the *Sutra of Great Wisdom* (S: *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*), attributed to Nāgārjuna (ca. 150–ca. 250) and translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva (344–413). T 1509:25, 57c–756b.
- 53 Meher McArthur, *Reading Buddhist Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 120–21.
- 54 E. Dale Saunders, *Mudrā: A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 67–68. Most eighth-century Yakushi icons do not hold a medicine jar in the right hand, an attribute that later became strongly identified with Medicine Buddhas. This iconography was not introduced to Japan until the ninth century. Moreover, with a few exceptions, Yakushi statues of the Nara period are all seated images. Often, they are hard to distinguish from Shaka images because their mudrās are the same: the right hand in *abhaya* (“fear not”) mudrā and the left in *varada* (“wish-granting”) mudrā. Some examples of eighth-century seated Yakushi are the icon from Kōzanji, Kyoto, which is made in the wood-core dry-lacquer technique; the wood-core dry-lacquer image at Jingoji, Kyoto; and the hollow-core dry-lacquer Yakushi enshrined in Hōryūji’s Saiendō.
- 55 Saunders, *Mudrā*, 64.
- 56 Ibid., 55.
- 57 For detailed photographs of the pedestal, see *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, vol. 6, *Yakushiji*, 62–63.
- 58 For more information on the motifs found on this pedestal, see Kaneko Hiroaki, “Wakaki kodai shoki rituryō kokka no risō butsu: Yakushiji kondō Yakushi sanzonzō ni tsuite,” in *National Treasures from Yakushiji-ji Temple*, ed. Tokyo National Museum et al., exhibition catalogue (Tokyo: Yomiuri Shinbun, NHK, and NHK Promotions, 2008), 56–58.
- 59 For a detailed, English-language discussion of the origins of *keka*, see Samuel C. Morse, “The Buddhist Transformation of Japan in the Ninth Century: The Case of Eleven-Headed Kannon,” in *Heian Japan, Centers and Peripheries*, ed. Mikael Adolphson, Edward Kamens, et al. (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2007), 161; and Cynthea Bogel, “Ritual and Representation in Eighth-Century Japanese Esoteric Buddhist Sculpture” (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1995), 165–67. See also de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 1, 249–409. *Keka* is derived from the Pali word *pātideseti*, meaning “in opposition to” or “to confess.”

- 60 Nakamura Hajime, *Bukkyōgo daijiten* (Tokyo: Tokyo Shoseki Inc., 1981), 296.
- 61 The earliest known example of *keka* appears in *Nihon shoki* in the entry for 642.7.25, which reads, “In the temples, the Mahāyāna sutras should be read by means of *tendoku* [sutra reading and recitation], and our transgressions should be repented as instructed by the Buddhas, and thus with respect [we] should pray for rain.” Satō Michiko, “Keka hōyō no keishiki seiritsu to tenkai: Sono ichi,” *Geinō no kagaku* 18 (1990): 141; *Nihon shoki*, Book 24, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 2, 240–41. See also Satō Michiko, “Girei ni miru Nihon no bukkyō,” in *Kokuhō to rekishi no tabi*, vol. 2, *Butsudō to kūkan to gishiki* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1999), 14.
- 62 Samuel C. Morse citing Nakamura Hajime, in Morse, “Buddhist Transformation of Japan,” 161n15.
- 63 Satō, “Girei ni miru Nihon no bukkyō,” 15.
- 64 Gorai, *Yakushi shinkō*, 36.
- 65 Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 164.
- 66 William Wayne Farris, *Population, Disease, and Land in Early Japan: 645–900* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 68.
- 67 Allan G. Grapard, “Religious Practices,” in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 2, *Heian Japan*, ed. Donald H. Shively and William H. McCullough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 529.
- 68 Entry for Tenpyō Shōhō (749).intercalary 5.10, *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 3, 80–81.
- 69 See Naoki Kōjirō, “The Nara State,” trans. Felicia G. Bock, in *The Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1, *Ancient Japan*, ed. Delmer Brown (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 221–68; and Sonoda Kōyū, “Early Buddha Worship,” in *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 1, 360–415.
- 70 De Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 1, 295–96; Yamagishi Tsuneto, “Tōdaiji Nigatsudō no sōken to shibi chūdai Jūichimen kekasho,” *Nanto bukkyō* 45 (1980): 4–7.
- 71 Entry for Tenpyō 11 (739).7.14, *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 2, 355.
- 72 De Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 1, 295.
- 73 Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 163. *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 2, 448–49. See also Bogel, “Ritual and Representation,” 290, for a summary of these events in English.
- 74 Satō, “Keka hōyō,” 139–93. *Yakushi keka-sho* are mentioned in *Zō Tōdaijishi kokusakuge*, in an entry for Tenpyō Hōji (763).6.4.
- 75 De Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 1, 298–99; *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 3, 38–39.
- 76 *Yakushi-kyō*, T 14:450, 407c. For an English translation, see Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 166.
- 77 Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 205; *Shichibutsu Yakushi-kyō*, T 14:451, 416a.
- 78 See, for example, Jane Marie Law, “Violence, Ritual Reenactment, and Ideology: The Hōjō-e (Rite for Release of Sentient Beings) of the Usa Hachiman Shrine in Japan,” *History of Religions* 33, no. 4 (May 1994): 325–57.
- 79 Entry for Tenpyō 17 (745).9.19, *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 4, 16–17. See also Yamagishi Tsuneto, “Tōdaiji Nigatsudō,” 8.
- 80 *The Path of Compassion: The Bodhisattva Precepts*, introduced and trans. Martine Batchelor (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2004), 69. See also Law, “Violence, Ritual Reenactment, and Ideology,” 325–26.
- 81 Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 167.
- 82 The current Yakushi image at Shin Yakushiji has inspired a great deal of controversy regarding its dating and provenance, as it was not originally made to be the temple’s principal icon of worship. For a comprehensive overview of this Yakushi’s historiography, see Nishikawa Shinji, “Yakushi nyorai zazō,” in *Yamato koji taikan*, ed. Ōta Hirotarō et al., vol. 4, *Shin Yakushiji, Byakugōji, Enjōji* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1977), 32–42. *Tōdaiji yōrōku*, excerpt reprinted in Nishikawa Shinji, “Shin Yakushiji,” in *Yamato koji taikan*, vol. 4, 109. See also Shimizu Masumi and Inagi Yoshikazu, *Shin Yakushiji to Byakugōji, Enjōji* (Tokyo: Hoikusha, 1990), 5; and Tsutsui Eishun, ed., *Tōdaiji yōrōku* (Osaka: Zenkoku Shobō, 1944), 15.
- 83 Entry for Tenpyō 19 (747), *Tōdaiji yōrōku*. See also entry for Ōwa 2 (962).8.31, *Nihon giryaku*, reprinted in *Kokushi taikei* (hereafter abbreviated as KT), vol. II, ed. Kuroita Katsumi (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1929–1967), 87.
- 84 Adachi Kō, “Shin Yakushiji hondō,” in *Kodai kenchiku no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1987), 133–42.
- 85 Ibid., 134–35.
- 86 *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, vol. 3, 16–17.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 A standing *jōroku* image measured approximately 5 meters, and if seated, about half that size (2 to 2.5 meters). Buddha icons in the Nara period were generally seated images.
- 89 Shimizu and Inagi, *Shin Yakushiji to Byakugōji, Enjōji*, 45–48.
- 90 “Hasseiki, haba 52 mētoru no kyodai kaidan Shin Yakushiji no kondō ato,” *Asahi shinbun*, 13 November 2008; [www.asahi.com/travel/news/OSK200811130103.html](http://www.asahi.com/travel/news/OSK200811130103.html) (no longer accessible).
- 91 The casting in bronze of the Tōdaiji Great Buddha began in 747, and continued through 749. Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, “The Legacy of Buddhist Art at Nara,” in *Buddhist Treasures from Nara*, ed. Michael R. Cunningham (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 1998), 21.

- 93 Nishikawa, “Shin Yakushiji,” 13. Noted in *Zō Tōdaijishi kokusakuge*.
- 94 Yiengpruksawan, “Legacy of Buddhist Art at Nara,” 25.
- 95 Ibid.
- 96 *Yomiuri shinbun*, 16 January 2010.
- 97 *Tōdaiji yōroku* (section on *bettō*), 173; *Nihon giryaku*, in *KT*, vol. II, 89.
- 98 For a detailed analysis of seven (and sometimes six) Yakushi figures represented on the mandorlas of Yakushi statues, see my article, “The Aura of Seven: Reconsidering the Shichibutsu Yakushi Iconography,” *Archives of Asian Art* 60 (2010): 19–42.

## Chapter 2

- 1 Neil McMullin, “On Placating the Gods and Pacifying the Populace: The Case of the Gion Goryō Cult,” *History of Religions* 27, no. 3 (February 1988): 272.
- 2 The notion of *onyryō* was present in the religious and social consciousness of the Japanese in the eighth century. One infamous *onyryō* of that time was the angry spirit of Fujiwara no Hirotugu (d. 740), who lost a political battle against the courtier Kibi no Makibi (ca. 695–775) and the Buddhist priest Genbō (d. 746), both of whom were political advisors to Tachibana no Moroe (684–757), the Minister of the Right.
- 3 Saeki Arikiyo, *Nihon kodai no seiji to shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1970), 216–17.
- 4 Awaji is a small island in the Seto Inland Sea, part of present-day Hyōgo Prefecture.
- 5 Prince Ate would later rule as Emperor Heizei (r. 806–809).
- 6 Nakano Genzō, *Keka no geijutsu* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1982), 121–22. *Nihon kōki*, fasc. 5, in *KT* 3, 6. *Nihon kōki* is the third of the Six National Histories, after *Nihon shoki* and *Shoku Nihongi*.
- 7 Nakai Shinkō, “Goryōe to matsuri,” in *Chingo kokka to jujutsu* (Tokyo: Shūeisha, 1989), 162–63.
- 8 *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 34, in *KT* 5, 219.
- 9 Entry for Enryaku 19 (800).7, *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 25, in *KT* 5, 155.
- 10 Saeki, *Nihon kodai no seiji*, 218–19. For *chōfu* and *yōfu*, see Felicia Bock, trans., *Engi-shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era* (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970), 64–65n87, n193. *Ton* was a measure of weight for cotton. According to *Heian jidaishi jiten*, three hundred *ton* of cotton was roughly equivalent to twelve *kan* (or about forty-five kilograms). Kodaigaku Kyōkai, Kodaigaku Kenkyūjo, eds., *Heian jidaishi jiten*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1994), 1779.
- 11 Paul Groner, *Saichō: The Establishment of the Japanese Tendai School* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), 65.
- 12 Saeki Arikiyo, *Wakaki hi no Saichō to sono jidai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1994), 282.
- 13 Yoshito S. Hakeda, *Kūkai: Major Works* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 7.
- 14 Unfortunately, this Buddha icon was destroyed in a fire in 1486, an event noted in *Tōbōki*. Itō, “Yakushi nyōraizō,” 79. The current icon in Tōji’s Golden Hall is a seated gilt-wood Yakushi statue, made in 1603.
- 15 Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 162. T 14:450, 406c–407a; T 14:451, 415c.
- 16 Pollution (in the sense of defilement) typically occurred through contact with blood and death. See Yamamoto Kōji, *Kegare to Ōharae* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1992), 14–39.
- 17 Ooms, *Imperial Politics and Symbolics*, 259.
- 18 Ibid., 260–61.
- 19 Sutras commonly recited during the daytime *tendoku* included the *Diamond Wisdom Sutra* (*Kongō hannya-kyō*) and the *Sutra of Great Wisdom*. Yamagishi Tsuneto, “Keka kara shushō, shunie e,” *Nanto bukkyō* 52 (1984): 27–49.
- 20 Yamagishi, “Tōdaiji Nigatsudō,” 35. *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 178, in *KT* 6, 222–23.
- 21 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, fasc. 3, in *KT* 3, 26.
- 22 The five provinces, part of an administrative system organized in the Asuka period, were Yamato, Yamashiro, Kawachi, Settsu, and Izumi (comprising portions of present-day Nara, Kyoto, Osaka, and Hyōgo Prefectures).
- 23 Nagaoka Ryūsaku, “Jingōji Yakushi nyōraizō no isō,” *Bijutsu kenkyū*, no. 359 (March 1994): 13; *Shoku Nihon kōki*, in *KT* 3, 66. The twenty temples were Bonshakuji, Sūfukuji, Tōji, Saiji, Tōdaiji, Kōfukuji, Shin Yakushiji, Gangōji, Daianji, Yakushiji, Saidaiji, Tōshōdaiji, Moto Gangōji, Gufukuji (Kawaradera), Hōryūji, Shitennōji, Enryakuji, Jingōji, Shōjinji, and Jōjūji. *Shoku Nihon kōki* is the fourth of the Six National Histories.
- 24 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 59. Nishio states that the seven-story pagoda, rather than the Golden Hall that housed the monastery’s chief icon, was more important when the *kokubunji* were first built. Emperor Shōmu intended to enshrine a copy in his own hand of the *Victorious Kings of the Golden Light Sutra* in every *kokubunji* pagoda.
- 25 The *Shoku Nihongi* entry for Tenpyō 13 (741).3.24 records a promulgation in which Shōmu commanded that a monumental Shaka statue be enshrined at one temple in every province. *Shoku Nihongi*, Aoki, 451. See also Joan Piggott, *The Emergence of Japanese Kingship* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 256; and de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 2, 448.
- 26 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 49–52.
- 27 Jūichimen Kannon was the other deity that enjoyed immense popularity at the time. On Jūichimen Kannon worship and *keka*, see Morse, “Buddhist Transformation of Japan,” 153–76.

- 28 Itō, “Yakushi nyoraizō,” 37. Nishio Masahito argues that Yakushi statues came to be enshrined in *kokubunji* soon after Emperor Shōmu’s death, during Empress Kōken’s reign. Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 70–71.
- 29 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 50–51. Nishio states that, in Shōmu’s edict of 741, sixty-two *kokubunji* were ordered to be built in the provinces. He also notes that, of the fifty-two current temples he calls *kokubunji*, some are not the original *kokubunji* established in the Nara period; also included are temples that merely bear the name *kokubunji*. Nevertheless, Nishio demonstrates that an overwhelming number of main icons enshrined at *kokubunji* are Yakushi (thirty of the identifiable thirty-six).
- 30 Many official documents from the Heian period, such as *Sandai jitsuroku*, *Ruijū kokushi*, and *Ruijū sandaikyaku*, record Yakushi *keka* rituals ordered by the court. Entries from 833, 834, and 837 specifically state that the *keka* was performed due to an outbreak of a severe epidemic. See *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 178, in *KT* 6, 222–23; and *Shoku Nihon kōki*, fasc. 3, in *KT* 3, 26.
- 31 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, fasc. 7, in *KT* 3, 67. Entries for Jōwa 4 (837).6.21, *Nihon giryaku*, fasc. 4, in *KT* 10, 350; Jōwa 7 (840).6.13, *Nihon giryaku*, fasc. 4, in *KT* 10, 358–59; and Jōwa 9 (842).3.15, *Nihon giryaku*, fasc. 4, in *KT* 10, 362.
- 32 Famines were not only caused by drought, but also by epidemics. When disease wiped out large populations (as often happened), not enough people remained to work the fields, resulting in poor harvests, which ultimately led to famines.
- 33 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, fasc. 9, in *KT* 3, 105. See also de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 1, 19–20. For a list of the Fifteen Great Temples, see *Heian jidaishi jiten*, vol. 1, 1164.
- 34 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, fasc. 11, in *KT* 3, 130. See also de Visser, *Ancient Buddhism in Japan*, vol. 1, 21.
- 35 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 4. Nishio notes that Yakushi *keka* performed as a precaution against epidemics became more common from the Jōwa era (834–848). Prior to 833, the only record of Yakushi worship concerned with suppressing an epidemic is from *Nihon giryaku*; the entry for Kōnin 14 (823).3.8 relates an order to have one hundred monks at Tōdaiji perform the Yakushi ritual in the wish to prevent an epidemic. *Nihon giryaku*, in *KT* 10, 314. See also Nagaoka Ryūsaku, “*Keka to butsuzō*,” *Rokuon zasshū, Nara Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan kenkyū kiyō* 8 (2006): 15.
- 36 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, fasc. 3, in *KT* 3, 26.
- 37 Nakano Genzō, “Kizugawa ryūiki no Yakushi keka to sono butsuzō,” *Kokka*, no. 1348 (2008): 5–21.
- 38 The Seven Highways refers to a network of public roads that covered all of Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu. The seven roads were the Tōkaidō, Tozandō, Hokurikudō, San’indō, Sanyōdō, Nankaidō, and Nishikaidō.
- 39 Gorai, *Yakushi shinkō*, 19.
- 40 Nagaoka, “*Keka to butsuzō*,” 16.
- 41 Nagaoka Ryūsaku, “*Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō sairon*,” *Kokuhō to rekishi no tabi* 3 (1999): 16. For a map of the Seven Lofty Mountains, see pp. 2–3.
- 42 Ibid., 16–17; Yōgaku no Kai, ed., *Kuchizusami chūkai* (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1997), 2. Mt. Takao, where Jingoji is located, is part of the mountain range that includes Mt. Atago.
- 43 *Shakke kanpanki*, in *Gunsho ruijū* (hereafter abbreviated as GR), ed. Hanawa Hokinoichi, vol. 24 (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1928), 415.
- 44 The five crops (*tenka gokoku*) included wheat, *awa* millet, beans, rice, and *kibi* millet.
- 45 *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 180, in *KT* 6, 259–60. *Ruijū kokushi*, compiled by Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), chronologically orders and categorizes the events contained in the Six National Histories.
- 46 See Mikael Adolphson, “Institutional Diversity and Religious Integration,” in *Heian Japan, Centers and Peripheries*, 212–44.
- 47 “Kinai” refers to the Five Main Provinces.
- 48 Mutsu encompassed present-day Fukushima, Miyagi, Iwate, and Aomori Prefectures; Dewa comprised Yamagata and Akita.
- 49 Other names for the Emishi include the Ezo, Ebisu, I, Tōi, Iteki, and Teki. The ethnic identity of the Emishi is too complicated for a detailed discussion here. As Mimi Yiengpruksawan states, “the word ‘Emishi’ probably encompassed a broad range of peoples living in northern Honshū and Hokkaidō. It may well be that the Emishi of Mutsu and Dewa provinces were of the same stock as the Kinai Japanese, possibly representing a very early Yayoi population that moved eastward and settled among the proto-Ainu aborigines whose language still resonates in Tōhoku place-names. What matters is that the Emishi, whether they were Ainu or *Yayoijin* (Yayoi people), or some mixture now unidentifiable, were for the authorities in Nara an alien people and culture that posed a threat to the expansion and consolidation of empire.” Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, *Hiraizumi: Buddhist Art and Regional Politics in Twelfth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1998), 19.
- 50 On the expansion of the Yamato state and the pacification of the Emishi, see Takahashi Tomio, “The Classical Polity and Its Frontier,” trans. Karl Friday, in *Capital and Countryside in Japan, 300–1180*, ed. Joan R. Piggott (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University East Asia Program, 2006), 136–41. The Kantō region surrounds present-day Tokyo.
- 51 Because Gyōki was an itinerant monk, many temples—particularly in the north—claim to have been established by him. These temples thus assert an early founding date, which is not unlikely.

- 52 Fujinami Yōkō, “Kokusekiji no Yakushi nyorai,” in “Yakushi nyorai no tera to shinkō,” *Daihōrin* 51, no. 12 (1934): 106–7.
- 53 Donald F. McCallum, “The Evolution of the Buddha and Bodhisattva Figures in Japanese Sculpture of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries” (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1973), 41–42.
- 54 Pure-wood images often have some polychrome application on parts of the face, such as the eyes, eyebrows, moustache, and lips.
- 55 On the appearance of wood-core dry-lacquer statues, see Samuel C. Morse, “Japanese Sculpture in Transition: An Eighth-Century Example from the Tōdaiji Buddhist Sculptural Workshop,” *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 13, no. 1 (1987): 53–69.
- 56 The Yakushi statues from Jingoji and Shin Yakushiji are two such examples belonging to the “pure-wood” group.
- 57 *T* 19:29, 924a. This text pertaining specifically to the Buddha Yakushi was translated into Chinese by the Indian Esoteric master Amoghavajra (C: Bukong; 705–774).
- 58 Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 354.
- 59 Kuno Takeshi, “Kokusekiji Yakushi nyoraizō,” *Bijutsu kenkyū*, no. 183 (March 1956): 97.
- 60 For a detailed analysis of Yakushi mandorlas bearing *kebutsu*, please see my article, “Aura of Seven.”
- 61 The *kebutsu* often found on the mandorlas of Śākyamuni images may be either *kako Shichibutsu* or the Seven Buddhas that are mentioned in the scripture *Bussetsu kanbutsu sanmai kaikyō*, translated into Chinese from Sanskrit by Buddhaghosha (359–429). *T* 15, 643; *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, vol. 2, *Hōryūji*, 16.
- 62 Kuno, “Kokusekiji,” 97. Kuno identifies the object held in the left hand of each *kebutsu* as a Buddhist jewel (*hōju*), rather than a medicine jar.
- 63 Ibid., 98.
- 64 Yiengpruksawan, *Hiraizumi*, 39.
- 65 Satō Akio, “Shōjōji Yakushi sanzonzō kō,” *Bijutsushi* 21 (1956): 1–13; Kuno, “Kokusekiji,” 100–101.
- 66 Paul Groner states that Shūen and Tokuitsu were more likely contemporaries than teacher and student. Groner, *Saichō*, 92. For one biographical account of Tokuitsu, see *Genkō shakusho*, fasc. 4, in *KT* 31, 73.
- 67 Satō Akio, “Michinoku no butsuzō,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 221 (October 1984): 21.
- 68 Satō, “Shōjōji Yakushi sanzonzō kō,” 2.
- 69 Satō, “Michinoku no butsuzō,” 22.
- 70 Wakabayashi Shigeru, “Tokuitsu densetsu no jitsuzō,” in “Hokuten no hibutsu,” *Bessatsu taiyō*, no. 74 (Summer 1991): 60.
- 71 Ibid., 59–60.
- 72 Other scholars, such as Kurata Bunsaku, have identified the wood as *harunire* (*Ulmus davidiana* var. *japonica*), which closely resembles *keyaki*. In either case, these trees are indigenous to the Tōhoku region. Kurata Bunsaku, “Aizu Shōjōji no Yakushi sanzonzō,” *Museum*, no. 246 (September 1971): 8.
- 73 Kaneko Hiroaki, Iwasa Mitsuharu, et al., “Nihon kodai ni okeru mokuchōzō no jushu to yōzaikan II: Hachi, kyūseiki o chūshin ni,” *Museum*, no. 583 (2003): 8.
- 74 The lotus pedestal and medicine jar are later replacements. It is not clear whether the image originally held a medicine jar, but given the position of its left hand, it probably did.
- 75 The *wari-hagi* method was applied to the head of the Shin Yakushiji icon. A large portion at the back of the head was detached and the center of the head hollowed out; the back was then reattached. See Nishikawa, “Yakushi nyorai zazō,” 34.
- 76 Kurata Bunsaku states that the “double-lidded” eyes seen on the Shōjōji Yakushi are not commonly found on early-Heian statuary. Another example of an early-Heian image with double-lidded eyes is the bodhisattva statue in half-lotus posture from Hōbōdaiin in Kyoto, which is dated to the ninth century. Kurata, “Aizu Shōjōji no Yakushi sanzonzō,” 6.

### Chapter 3

- 1 *Shinchō kōki* (Chronicle of Lord Nobunaga), excerpted in *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, 2nd ed., ed. Wm. Theodore de Bary, Donald Keene, et al., vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 446.
- 2 This view has been changing slowly in recent years, as evidenced by the large-scale art exhibition “Faith and Syncretism: Saichō and the Treasures of Tendai,” held at both Kyoto and Tokyo National Museums between 2005 and 2006.
- 3 The Konpon Chūdō experienced fires in Jōhei 5 (935), Kenmu 2 (1335), Eikyō 7 (1435), Meihō 8 (1499), and Genki 2 (1571). Mōri Hisashi believes that Saichō’s Yakushi and the set of seven Medicine Buddhas, all secret images (*hibutsu*), were destroyed in the fire of 1435. See Mōri Hisashi, “Genki izen no Enryakuji Konpon Chūdō to anchi butsuzō,” in *Nihon butsuzōshi kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1980), 83–85; first published in *Kokuhō Enryakuji Konpon Chūdō oyobi jūyō bunkazai kairō shūri kōji hōkokusho* (Tokyo: Kokuhō Enryakuji Konpon Chūdō Shūri Jimusho, 1955).
- 4 Ichijō Chū’s life dates are unknown. Groner states that Kōjō probably wrote *Denjutsu isshinkaimon* around 833–834. Groner, *Saichō*, 17.
- 5 *Sanmon dōshaki*, *Kuin bukkakushō*, and *Eigaku yōki* are all found in *GR* 24.
- 6 It is also possible that the icon is no longer extant.
- 7 The term “iconological” here denotes a method of investigation that questions why a certain subject (e.g., Saichō’s Yakushi statue) was depicted in a certain

- manner—for example, as a standing Yakushi image at a time when seated Yakushi figures were the norm.
- 8 The aforementioned *Eizan daishiden* and *Denjutsu issinkaimon* are the two major sources for biographical information on Saichō. For a discussion of these two primary sources, as well as a summary of Saichō's early years, see Groner, *Saichō*, 17–26. The date of Saichō's birth has been a point of some controversy. The 767 date is based on *Eizan daishiden*, while *Dengyō daishi do en an narabini sōgō chō* (ordination certificate) mentions a date of 766. For details, see Groner, *Saichō*, 19–20.
- 9 Upon receiving his ordination, Saichō was appointed head priest of Ōmi Kokubunji. This temple burned down in 785, however, the same year that Saichō received training in the two hundred and fifty precepts. The four sutras were those regularly chanted at the various *kokubunji* to pray for the country's well-being.
- 10 *Gusokukai* is the administration of the two hundred and fifty monastic precepts. See Groner, *Saichō*, 26.
- 11 *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, ed. Hieizan Senshuin Eizan Gakuin, vol. 5 (Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai, 1975), 3. See also Groner, *Saichō*, 27.
- 12 *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 507b.
- 13 *Sanmon dōshaki* notes that, initially, the temple that Saichō built on Mt. Hiei was called Hieizanji. *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 468b. See also *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 507b.
- 14 *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 507b.
- 15 *Kuin bukkakushō*, in GR 24, 573a. *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 470a. All three halls were modest in size, measuring approximately 10 meters long, 4.7 to 4.8 meters wide, and 3.6 meters tall.
- 16 See entries for Enryaku 12 (793).1.1 and Enryaku 13 (794).9.3 in *Kuin bukkakushō* and *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24.
- 17 It was not until Kōnin 13 (823).2.26 that the official name “Enryakuji” was conferred on Saichō's temple by Emperor Saga (r. 809–823). *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 43.
- 18 See Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 81–82.
- 19 Stanley Weinstein, “Aristocratic Buddhism,” in *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 2, 468. The “One Vehicle” doctrine found in the *Lotus Sutra* was valued by Saichō and the Tendai school. It states that the Three Vehicles (*sanjō*) of Buddhism as taught by Śākyamuni are an expedient device to lead people of all spiritual and intellectual levels to the One Vehicle, which would then lead all sentient beings to Buddhahood.
- 20 Matsuura Masaaki, “Tendai Yakushizō no seiritsu to tenkai,” *Bijutsushi gaku* 15 (1993): 21. An annual series of events called the Lotus Sutra Lectures was initiated by Saichō in 798, around the time that the complex came to be known as the Ichijō Shikan'in. Prominent monks from Nara were invited to attend.
- 21 According to Mōri Hisashi, the name “Konpon Ichijō Shikan'in” still appears in the entry for Shōwa 2 (835) in *Enryakuji kenritsu engi* (835), but by the mid-ninth century, the change in name to Konpon Chūdō was probably complete. Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 82.
- 22 For example, many Buddhist icons are claimed to have been made by Kūkai or Gyōki, the stated founder of Kokusekiji.
- 23 The entry for Eikyō 7 (1435).2.5 in *Zokushi gushō*, compiled by Yanagihara Norimitsu (also known as Motomitsu; 1746–1800) in the second half of the eighteenth century, reads, “Yakushi Buddha, the principal icon of worship, is destroyed by fire.” See Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 93.
- 24 *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 468b.
- 25 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 94. *Denjutsu issinkaimon*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 1, 523–648. The document cited by Kōjō is a proposal submitted to the court by Saichō.
- 26 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 95. Ensai's life dates are unknown. His petition is recorded in an entry for Ninna 2 (886).7.5 in *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*. See *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, in KT 4, 614.
- 27 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 96. The vow was recorded by the Heian courtier Takashina no Naritada (925–998) upon Ryōgen's request. See *Tengen sannen Chūdō kuyō ganmon*, in *Gunsho ruijū*, ed. Hanawa Hokinoichi, vol. 15 (Tokyo: Keizai Zasshisha, 1905), 590a.
- 28 The establishment of Enryakuji as an independent Tendai institution is discussed later in this chapter.
- 29 *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 509b. In small letters, the compiler added the following note: “[The Yakushi image] stands five shaku, five sun in height, and is golden in color, with multicolored patterns on its robe. Dengyō Daishi [Saichō] made it himself, and following the late master's will, Shuzen Daishi [Gishin] made the image golden-colored with polychromed patterns on the robe.”
- 30 Kōfukuji's Eastern Golden Hall, lost in the fire of 1046, once held a monumental bronze Yakushi triad. Seven monumental, seated Yakushi in clay or lacquer were once housed in Shin Yakushiji's Golden Hall; see Mizuno Keizaburō in *Tōdaiji to Heijōkyō: Nara no kenchiku, chōkoku*, Nihon bijutsu zenshū, ed. Mizuno Keizaburō, Okada Hideo, et al., vol. 4 (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1990), 152. Saidaiji's monumental seated Yakushi statue was enshrined in the Yakushi Golden Hall (Yakushi Kondō). With the exception of the Yakushiji Yakushi, the others are no longer extant.
- 31 *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 469a; *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 509b.
- 32 This statue is currently installed in the Treasure House (*hōzō*) at Tōshōdaiji. This wooden Yakushi and two other bodhisattva images have been discussed

- extensively by art historians, especially with regard to their dating, so I will not be discussing this issue here.
- 33 These wood images are dated to the second half of the eighth century (or more specifically, from 759 to 780). See Samuel C. Morse, “The Formation of the Plain-Wood Style and the Development of Japanese Buddhist Sculpture: 760–840” (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1985), 116–20. See also “Tōshōdaiji,” in *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, vol. 2, 44.
- 34 See Matsuda Seiichirō, “Kōmyō kōtaigō fuyo to Tōshōdaiji mokuchōgun,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 158 (1985): 25–26; and Nishikawa Shinji, “Tōshōdaiji: Ganjin to mokuchōgun,” in *Nara no tera*, vol. 20, ed. Nishikawa Shinji and Yoneda Tasaburō (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994), 6–7.
- 35 See Chapter One of this volume for a discussion of these *mudrā*.
- 36 These “auspicious icons” are mentioned in the account of Ganjin’s trip to Japan, *Tōdai wajō tōseiden* (779) by Ōmi no Mifune (722–785). See Matsuura, “Tendai Yakushizō,” 17–38; and Ishida Mizumaro, *Ganjin: Sono kairitsu shisō* (Tokyo: Daizō Shuppansha, 1974), 313–14. *Tōdai wajō tōseiden* and a translation into modern Japanese may be found on pages 283–325 of Ishida’s book.
- 37 Previously, the wood images from the former Tōshōdaiji Lecture Hall were thought to have been made from Japanese cypress (*hinoki*). But recently, using advanced scientific techniques, scholars have reevaluated the wood and discovered that, in fact, indigenous Japanese nutmeg (*kaya*) was used instead. See Iwasa Mitsuharu, “Heian jidai zenki no chōkoku: Ichiboku chō no tenkai,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 457 (June 2004): 25–26.
- 38 Ibid., 50.
- 39 The exact life dates of Nyohō, Dōchū, and Enchō are unknown. Enchō later became the second abbot of Enryakuji. See Groner, *Saichō*, 7, 32.
- 40 Of *danzō* images made in Japan, those of Yakushi, Shaka, and Jūichimen Kannon are the most numerous. For studies on Japanese *danzō* images, see Mōri Hisashi, “Heian jidai no danzō ni tsuite,” in *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1970), 134–45; and Kuno Takeshi, “Danzōyō chōkokku no keifu,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 43 (1960), reprinted in Kuno, *Heian shoki chōkokushi no kenkyū*, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1974), 259–80. See also Suzuki Yoshihiro, “Hakuki to danzō chōkokku,” *Bijutsushi* 107 (1979): 15–35; and Inoue Tadashi, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō to sono shūhen,” in *Domon Ken Nihon no chōkokku*, ed. Domon Ken, vol. 2, *Heianki* (Tokyo: Bijutsu Shuppansha, 1980), 174–85.
- 41 Morse, “Buddhist Transformation of Japan,” 166.
- 42 Helmut Brinker, “Facing the Unseen: On the Interior Adornment of Eizon’s Iconic Body,” *Archives of Asian Art* 50 (1997–1998): 49.
- 43 Robert H. Sharf, “The Scripture on the Production of Buddha Images,” in *Religions in China in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 262. See also Martha L. Carter, *The Mystery of the Udayana Buddha*, Annali. Istituto Orientale di Napoli, vol. 50, no. 3, supp. 64 (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, 1990).
- 44 *T* 125:2, 706a. “Five shaku” is often translated into English as “five feet.”
- 45 Tokyo National Museum et al., eds., *Butsuzō: Ichiboku ni komerareta inori*, exhibition catalogue (Tokyo: The Yomiuri Shimbun, 2006), 4.
- 46 In 985, the Japanese monk Chōnen (938–1016) commissioned two Chinese artisans to make a copy of the Udayana Shaka in China, which Chōnen brought back to Japan. This statue was enshrined at Seiryōji after Chōnen’s death. See Donald F. McCallum, “The Saidaiji Lineage of the Seiryōji Shaka Tradition,” *Archives of Asian Art* 49 (1996): 51–67.
- 47 Xuanzang, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*, trans. Li Rongxi (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 1996), 160–61.
- 48 Iwasa, “Heian jidai zenki,” 23.
- 49 Ibid., 26. See also Kaneko Hiroaki, Iwasa Mitsuharu, et al., “Nihon kodai ni okeru mokuchōzō no jushu to yōzaikan: Shichi, hachiseiki o chūshin ni,” *Museum*, no. 555 (1998): 3–53; and Inoue Kazutoshi, “Tōshōdaiji mokuchōgun no shūkyōteki kinō ni tsuite,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 261 (March 2002): 13–35.
- 50 At least two translations of this sutra were known in Japan by the 730s. For *Jūichimen shinju shingyō gisho*, see *T* 39:1802. See also Morse, “Buddhist Transformation of Japan,” 158.
- 51 To quote the commentary, “The Buddha was asked, ‘If there is no white sandalwood, what type of wood should people in this country use to make an image?’ He replied, ‘White sandalwood should be used to make an image. If sandalwood is not available, then use *bomu* to make the image.’” *T* 39:1802, 101ob. For a discussion of *haku*, see Morse, “Formation of the Plain-Wood Style,” 197–98. See also Iwasa, “Heian jidai zenki,” 24–25.
- 52 Asai Kazuharu, “Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte III,” *Museum*, no. 377 (1982): 13, n89.
- 53 Kaneko et al., “Nihon kodai ni okeru mokuchōzō no jushu to yōzaikan II,” 5–44.
- 54 Iwasa, “Heian jidai zenki,” 26.
- 55 Donald K. Swearer, *Becoming the Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Thailand* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), 18.
- 56 Samuel C. Morse, “The Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji and the Formation of the Plain-Wood Style,” *Archives of Asian Art* 40 (1987): 37–38.

- 57 *Sanmon dōshaki*, in *GR* 24, 468b.
- 58 The *gumonjihō* is an Esoteric meditation ritual dedicated to the bodhisattva Kokūzō, believed to strengthen memory.
- 59 *Shiga-ken no chimei*, vol. 25 of *Nihon rekishi chimei taikei* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1991), 189.
- 60 Kuno, *Heian shoki chōkokushō no kenkyū*, vol. 1, 259–62.
- 61 Ninchū, *Menju kuketsu*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 413.
- 62 Matsuura, “Tendai Yakushizō,” 25–26. Kakuzen’s life dates are unknown.
- 63 *Kakuzenshō*, in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō zuzō* (hereafter abbreviated as *TZ*), vol. 4, no. 3022 (Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1933), 42.
- 64 Kyōkai, “On the Wooden Image of Yakushi Buddha which Showed an Extraordinary Sign, Washed Away in the Water and Buried in the Sand,” in *Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition: The Nihon Ryōki of the Monk Kyōkai*, trans. and annotated by Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura, vol. 2, tale 39 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1973). Kyōkai’s life dates are unknown.
- 65 The idea of Yakushi as the Buddha of the Age of the Semblance Dharma appears in *Menju kuketsu*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 414. The three periods of the Buddhist Law are discussed in the following section of this chapter.
- 66 Fabio Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 63.
- 67 Robert M. Gimello, “Icon and Incantation,” in *Images in Asian Religions: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 248.
- 68 Roelof Van Straten, *An Introduction to Iconography* (Langhorne, PA: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, 1994), 10.
- 69 See Chapter One for more on these attributes.
- 70 For an account of Śākyamuni’s early years, see Andrew Skilton, *A Concise History of Buddhism* (Birmingham: Windhorse Publications, 1994), 19–24; and Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 19–31.
- 71 The theory of the “Three Bodies of the Buddha” is discussed below.
- 72 Of course, there are exceptions, such as images of a seated bodhisattva Maitreya (Miroku) with one leg pendant.
- 73 The *haya-raigō*, or “swift welcoming descent,” is a sub-category of the *raigō* genre in which steeply trailing clouds and other visual cues indicate the fast progress of the deity to this world.
- 74 Robert L. Brown, “God on Earth: The Walking Buddha in the Art of South and Southeast Asia,” *Artibus Asiae* 50, nos. 1–2 (1990); 74.
- 75 Ibid., 75–76.
- 76 Nagaoka Ryūsaku, “Jōgyōsō to kōkan shita sanji no reizō,” *Kokuhō to rekishi no tabi* 3 (1999): 7.
- 77 Richard John Bowring, *The Religious Traditions of Japan, 500–1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 115–16.
- 78 Satō Masato, “Hieizan,” in *Sanke no taishi Saichō*, ed. Ōkubo Ryōshun (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2004), 60.
- 79 Groner, *Saichō*, 170–71. See also Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 58–59.
- 80 Groner, *Saichō*, 171–72; Tamura Enchō, *Asuka bukkyōshi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 1969), 166–67.
- 81 This theory is based on the writings of the Chinese monk Daoxuan (596–667). Various accounts describe the decline of the Buddhist teachings, with slight differences in the lengths of the periods. Another theory, for example, calculates the length of *shōbō* as five hundred years, and *zōhō* as one thousand. Groner, *Saichō*, 171.
- 82 In China and Japan during the eighth century, the date of the Buddha’s death was accepted as 949 BCE, rather than the fifth century BCE (as currently thought). Therefore, according to this death date, the Nara period fell within the Age of the Semblance Dharma. See Groner, *Saichō*, 171n5. Kyoko Motomochi Nakamura states that the Tenpyō era was regarded as being within the Age of the Semblance Dharma, as indicated by passages from *Shoku Nihongi*. Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories*, 12. See also *Shoku Nihongi*, Tenpyō 15 (743).1.12, Aoki, vol. 2, 414–15: “The age of the Semblance Dharma is revived ...”; Tenpyō hōjō 4 (760).7.23, Aoki, vol. 3, 356–57: “Now the age of the Semblance Dharma is coming to an end ....”
- 83 Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories*, 13; Tamura Enchō, *Nihon bukkyō shisōshi kenkyū* (Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten, 1959), 277–308. On Saichō’s views of *zōhō* and *mappō*, see Hayami Tasuku, *Heian bukkyō to mappō shisō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2006), 203–4.
- 84 Groner, *Saichō*, 173. Saichō’s argument appears in *Kenkairon*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 1, 101–2.
- 85 *Bussetsu shari hotsu keka kyō*, translated by An Shigao (d. 168), in *T 24:1492*.
- 86 Gorai, *Yakushi shinkō*, 14.
- 87 Ibid., 16. Satō, “Hieizan,” 60.
- 88 Mimi Yiengpruksawan, “Buddha’s Bodies and the Iconographical Turn in Buddhism,” in *Buddhist Spirituality: Later China, Korea, Japan, and the Modern World*, ed. Takeuchi Yoshinori (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1999), 396.

- 89 Saichō goes on to state, “This Buddha [Yakushi] is the True Buddha (*honbutsu*) of Potentiality and Response (*kikan*) of the Three Periods, and is also called the Teacher of the Three Kinds of Lotus; the underlying meaning of One Body as Three Bodies, which is the same as Three Bodies as One Body, should be considered a secret teaching.” *Menju kuketsu*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 414.
- 90 Rambelli, *Buddhist Materiality*, 63.
- 91 *Menju kuketsu*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 2. Shaka was considered the Buddha of the Age of the True Dharma, and Amida, the Buddha of the Age of the Degenerate Dharma.
- 92 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 58–60.
- 93 *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 1, 1–3. For an English translation of the vows, see Groner, *Saichō*, 28–29.
- 94 Groner, *Saichō*, 29.
- 95 Nakamura, *Miraculous Stories*, 12.
- 96 Ibid., 28–29. Buddhist meetings held by laypeople would not have taken place on Mt. Hiei, where the monastic community was located; therefore, attendance at such a meeting would have required Saichō to travel beyond the mountain.
- 97 From the *Yakushi Sutra*, translated by Xuanzang in 650; T 450, 406. For an English translation, see Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 163–64.
- 98 Nagaoka Ryūsaku, “Michinoku no butsuzō, zōkei to fudo,” in *Tōhoku: Sono rekishi to bunka o saguru*, ed. Hanato Masahiro (Sendai: Tōhoku Daigaku Shuppankai, 2006), 93.
- 99 Alexander Griswold, *Dated Buddha Images of Northern Siam* (Ascona, Switzerland: Artibus Asiae, 1957), 271.
- 100 Nagao Gadjin, “On the Theory of the Buddha Body,” *The Eastern Buddhist* 1, no. 6 (May 1973): 32. During the medieval period, by which time Enryakuji had become a fully developed monastic center, the idea of the Three Bodies of the Buddha was played out across the entire mountain, which was divided into three major regions: the Eastern Pagoda region, the Western Pagoda region, and the Yokawa region. Yakushi was the central icon of the Eastern Pagoda region, where the Central Hall was located; Amida was enshrined in the main hall of the Western Pagoda region; and Shaka, in the Yokawa region.
- 101 Richard H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 260.
- 102 James Preston, “Spiritual Magnetism: An Organizing Principle for the Study of Pilgrimage,” in *Sacred Journeys: The Anthology of Pilgrimage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 33. Preston uses the term “spiritual magnetism” in his descriptions of pilgrimages and sacred sites.
- 103 *Genkō shakusho*, in *KT* 31, 54. *Genkō shakusho*, “An Account of the Śākyā [House] from the Genkō [Era],” was written in Genkō 2 (1322) by the Tōfukuji abbot Kōkan Shiren (1278–1346). This event is also recorded in *Ruijū kokushi*, in *KT* 6, 239.
- 104 *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 44.
- 105 This idea is stated in the *Petition Asking for Permission to Install Bodhisattva Monks*, submitted in the fifth month of 818. See *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 2, 471–73, for details of the petitions submitted by Saichō between 818 and 819.
- 106 Ibid., 142, n.b. 117. See also Paul Groner, “*Jitsudō Ninkū on Ordinations*,” *Japan Review* 15 (2003): 51–75. The bodhisattva precepts, as given in the *Brahma’s Net Sutra*, consist of ten major and forty-eight minor commandments, in contrast to the *shibunritsu*’s two hundred and fifty. In addition to Saichō’s ideological problems with the *shibunritsu*, their use would have required his candidates to be ordained in Nara.
- 107 This petition, titled “Regulations for Tendai-Lotus Yearly Ordinands and for Those who Wish to Turn Away from Hīnayāna Teachings towards Mahāyāna Teachings,” is laid out in the *Shijōshiki* (Regulations in Four Articles), submitted on 819.3.15. See Groner, *Saichō*, 137–44.
- 108 For a translation of the bodhisattva precepts in this sutra, see Batchelor, *Path of Compassion*.
- 109 This “sign” usually is thought to appear as a dream or vision of the Buddha. Bernard Faure, *Visions of Power: Imagining Medieval Japanese Buddhism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 245; and Groner, “*Jitsudō Ninkū on Ordinations*,” 57, 61. See also Yuasa Yasuo, *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory*, ed. Thomas P. Kasulis (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), 94–95.
- 110 Faure, *Visions of Power*, 245.
- 111 Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward a Theory in Ritual* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 104. David Eckel also makes reference to Smith’s idea in “The Power of the Buddha’s Absence: On the Foundations of Mahāyāna Buddhist Ritual,” *Journal of Ritual Studies* 4, no. 2 (Summer 1990): 62.
- 112 *Eigaku yōki*, in *GR* 24, 537a. This ordination ceremony is also mentioned in *Eizan daishiden*, a much earlier account; see *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 44. See also *Jikaku daishiden*, in *Zoku gunsho ruijū*, ed. Hanawa Hokinoichi, rev. Ōta Tōshirō, vol. 8 (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1923–1928), 685a.
- 113 *Denjutsu isshinkaimon*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 1, 202.
- 114 Nora, “Between Memory and History,” 7.

**Chapter 4**

- 1 Faure, *Visions of Power*, 247.
- 2 McCallum, *Zenkōji and its Icon*, 6.
- 3 Groner, *Saichō*, 269. Most of Kanmu's reign, the period from 782 to 806, was known as the Enryaku era.
- 4 Paul Groner states that Tendai lecturers went out into the provinces to garner support for the early expansion of the Tendai school. The Tendai and Shingon schools actively competed against each other to extend their influence to the provinces through their lecturers. *Ibid.*, 275–76.
- 5 For photographs of these images, see Itō, “Yakushi nyorai-zō,” figs. 14, 74.
- 6 For example, some of these copies do not match the height of the original icon. Itō Shirō, “Myōhōin gomadō Fudō Myōō ryūzō ni tsuite: Tendai kei Fudō no ikkeifu,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 236 (1998): 30.
- 7 Ōtomo no Kunimichi's name appears briefly in *Nihon kōki* (in entries from 813 and 815). See *Nihon kōki*, in *KT* 3, 121, 130. Kunimichi was one of Saichō's staunchest lay supporters; see Groner, *Saichō*, 270.
- 8 *Eigaku yōki*, in *GR* 24, 509b. *Sanmon dōshaki*, which lists nine Yakushi statues in total, does not mention this Yakushi image dedicated by Ōtomo Kunimichi and carved by An'e; *Kuin bukkakushō*, however, does mention it. See *Sanmon dōshaki*, in *GR* 24, 469a; and *Kuin bukkakushō*, in *GR* 24, 570b.
- 9 Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 87.
- 10 The system of lay administrators was established in 823 for Enryakuji. These officials served as Enryakuji's representatives at court, and were appointed by the court. They were usually ranking courtiers who were in positions close to the emperor. See Mikael S. Adolphson, *The Gates of Power: Monks, Courtiers and Warriors in Premodern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 28–29.
- 11 Groner, *Saichō*, 270.
- 12 The Three Jewels of Buddhism are the Buddha (the spiritual teacher), the Dharma (the Buddhist Law, or the Buddha's teachings), and the Saṅgha (the monastic community).
- 13 See Kikuchi Kyoko, “Zoku bettō no seiritsu,” in *Saichō*, ed. Shioiri Ryōdō and Kiuchi Gyōō (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunsha, 1982), 428. This article first appeared in *Shirin* 51, no. 1 (January 1968).
- 14 *Eigaku yōki*, in *GR* 24, 509.
- 15 *Keiran shūyōshū* (Collection of Assembled Leaves of Valley Mist), compiled by the monk Kōshū between 1311 and 1348, records the various ceremonies and oral transmissions of Enryakuji; extant volumes amount to a total of 113 scrolls. *T* 76:2410. See also Kuno Takeshi, “Heian shoki ni okeru Enryakuji no butsuzō,” *Bijutsu kenkyū*, no. 260 (September 1969): 3–4.
- 16 Helmut Brinker, “Sublime Adornment: Kirikane in Chinese Buddhist Sculpture,” *Orientations* 34, no. 10 (2003): 30. See also Dietrich Seckel, *Buddhist Art of East Asia* (Bellingham, WA: Western Washington University, 1989), 184; Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis, *Japanese Mandalas: Representations of the Sacred* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999), 9; and Kyoto National Museum, ed., *Bukkyō bijutsu ni okeru “shōgon”*, exhibition catalogue (Kyoto: Kyoto National Museum, 1987).
- 17 The golden body, known as *konjikisō*, gleaming with golden light, is one of the Thirty-two Major Marks of the Buddha (discussed in Chapter One).
- 18 Brinker, “Sublime Adornment,” 30.
- 19 The gilding and painting of Buddhist sculptures dates from before the Tang. For example, sixth-century limestone sculptures with gold and polychrome ornamentation have been discovered in Qingzhou, Shandong Province. For details on these images, see Brinker, “Sublime Adornment,” 31–32.
- 20 Matsuura, “Tendai Yakushizō,” 28. See also Xuanzang, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record*, 386.
- 21 On the adornment of Buddhist images at Dunhuang, see Roderick Whitfield, “Ruixiang at Dunhuang,” in *Function and Meaning in Buddhist Art*, ed. K.R. van Kooij and H. van der Veere (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1995), 149–56.
- 22 Matsuura, “Tendai Yakushizō,” 28. For more detail on this particular image, see Sun Xiushen, “Bakukōkutsu no engi setsuwa ga,” in *Tonkō bakukōkutsu*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1980–1982), 240–41 and fig. 11.
- 23 One example is an early-Tang mural painting of a standing Bhaisajyaguru in Cave 322 (south side of the east wall). See Luo Huqing, ed., “Zun xiang hua juan,” in *Dunhuang shi ku kuan ji*, vol. 2 (Hong Kong: Shang Wu Yin Shu Guan, 1999), 65, pl. 52.
- 24 Matsuura, “Tendai Yakushizō,” 29.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 28. See also Itō Shirō, *Heian jidai chōkokushō no kenkyū* (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 2000), 133.
- 26 Matsuura, “Tendai Yakushizō,” 29. Matsuura states that this decorative mode of circular lotus patterns in cut gold can be found on the relief images inside a portable shrine from Hōonji in Kyoto, dated to the late Tang or early Song dynasty (960–1279). Circular floral patterns in cut gold can also be found on the Seiryōji-style Shaka statues at the Kyoto temples Mimurododera (early Kamakura period) and Byōdōji (ca. 1213). These two statues wear monastic robes polychromed in red and decorated with circular patterns, and blue undergarments. See also Gregory Henderson and Leon Hurvitz, “The Buddha of Seiryōji: New Finds and New Theory,” *Artibus Asiae* 19, no. 1 (1956): 12.

- 27 When Saichō and Gishin were in China, the temple was known as Longxingsi; when Gishin's disciple Enchin (814–891) visited the temple subsequently, it had been renamed Kaiyuansi. Matsuura, "Tendai Yakushizō," 28–29.
- 28 *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 509b.
- 29 Sherry D. Fowler, "Hibutsu: Secret Buddhist Image of Japan," *Journal of Asian Culture* 15 (1991–1992): 150–51. See also Kuno Takeshi, *Hibutsu* (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1978), 5–13; and Lucie Weinstein, "The Yumedono Kannon: Problems in Seventh-Century Sculpture," *Archives of Asian Art* 42 (1989): 25–48. While the practice of keeping sacred images as secret icons behind closed doors or curtains appears in Heian-period documents, it should be noted that the term *hibutsu* probably developed later, in the medieval period. See Fabio Rambelli, "Secret Buddhas: The Limits of Buddhist Representation," *Monumenta Nipponica* 57, no. 3 (2002): 274–75.
- 30 Fowler, "Hibutsu," 150.
- 31 *Asabashō*, fasc. 46, in TZ 8, 308b.
- 32 Keimyō was the twenty-seventh abbot of Enryakuji; he received the title of *zasu* in 1028 (*Manju* 5).
- 33 Mōri, "Genki izen no Enryakuji," 89.
- 34 *Kuin bukkakushō*, in GR 24, 572a. Jien became Enryakuji's abbot in 1192. He is well known as the compiler of the thirteenth-century history *Gukanshō*.
- 35 See Chapter One for a discussion of these *mudrās*.
- 36 See Chapter One.
- 37 *Asabashō*, fasc. 46, in TZ 8, 305a.
- 38 Mōri, "Genki izen no Enryakuji," 93; *Keiran shūyōshū*, in T 76:2410, 852b.
- 39 Cited in Mōri, "Genki izen no Enryakuji," 93. See also Akiyama Shōkai, *Butsuzō inzō* (Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1985), 241–43.
- 40 Akiyama, *Butsuzō inzō*, 241–42. This *mudrā* combination can be found in Yakushi paintings at Dunhuang. See Luo, "Zun xiang hua juan," plate 51 for the Sui-period seated Yakushi in Cave 305, and plate 57 for the mid-Tang standing Yakushi in Cave 220.
- 41 For more on this image, see Kuno Takeshi, ed., *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 3, *Butsuzō shūsei* (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1997), pl. 261.
- 42 Mōri Hisashi, "Tendai chōkoku no shujusō," in *Nihon butsuzōshi kenkyū* (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1980), 211–12.
- 43 Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 7, 216, fig. 338. Not much is known about the Eikoni image. The ninth-century dating is based on stylistic analysis by Ishikawa Tomohiko, who wrote the entry on the image in *Nihon no butsuzō*.
- 44 Tsuda Tetsuei, "Iwate Daikōji no Yakushi nyorai ryūzō," *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 262 (2002): 116.
- 45 Nagaoka Ryūsaku (citing Tsuda Tetsuei), "Murōji kondō shobutsu shaken," paper presented at the Chōkokushi Kenkyūkai Kenkyū Happyō, Tokyo National Museum, June 5, 1999; quoted in Nagaoka, "Jingoji Yakushi nyorai zō sairon," 19.
- 46 *Kakuzenshō*, fasc. 3, in TZ 5, 50, fig. 6.
- 47 Kan'eiji was pledged during the rule of the second Tokugawa shogun, Hidetada (r. 1605–1623).
- 48 Tamamuro Fumio, "Edo no nanboku ni naze kyodai jin ga ichi surunoka," in *Bukkyō shin hakken*, vol. 29, *Kan'eiji, Zōjōji* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun, 2008), 5.
- 49 Enryakuji's Central Hall was rebuilt during the Kan'eji era in 1642, and restored to its original size (before its expansion in 980): eleven bays wide by four bays deep. As noted in Chapter Three, the Central Hall was completely destroyed by Oda Nobunaga's troops in the 1571 torching of the mountain temple complex. Sadly, Kan'eiji's grand Central Hall was also destroyed, in the Ueno Battle of 1868.
- 50 Upon Kan'eiji's establishment, Sekishinji was made into a branch temple (*matsuji*) of the former. As a main temple (*honji*), Kan'eiji had administrative control over the branch, allowing for the "transfer" of Sekishinji's Yakushi icon to Kan'eiji.
- 51 The secret icon made rare appearances at Kyoto National Museum in 2005 and at Tokyo National Museum in 2006 for the exhibition "Faith and Syncretism: Saichō and the Treasures of Tendai." See Kyoto National Museum and Tokyo National Museum, eds., *Saichō to Tendai no kokuhō* (Tokyo: Benridō, 2005), 150, pl. 114.
- 52 Miyake Hisao, entry on the Kan'eiji Yakushi image in *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 1, pl. 113. Maruyama Shirō identifies the wood as Japanese cypress (*hinoki*). See his catalogue entry in Kyoto National Museum and Tokyo National Museum, *Saichō to Tendai no kokuhō*, 332.
- 53 This idea has been confirmed in a study of the Seiryōji Shaka and its numerous replications by Donald McCallum; see McCallum, "Saidaiji Lineage," 51–67. McCallum cites as an example the Saidaiji Shaka statue, which was copied directly from the Seiryōji image and yet shows significant deviations from it (see p. 65).
- 54 *Ibid.*, 31.
- 55 This carving technique is discussed in the next section.
- 56 En no Gyōja (also known as En no Ozuno and En no Ubasoku) is a semi-legendary figure believed to have died around 700.
- 57 Ennin, one of Saichō's disciples, became Enryakuji's third abbot in 854.
- 58 A detailed report on this statue has been published by Tsuda Tetsuei, the aforementioned "Iwate Daikōji no Yakushi nyorai ryūzō."
- 59 Most *natabori* images are dated between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, and are found in Central and Eastern Japan. For more information on *natabori*

- statues, see Kuno Takeshi, *Natabori* (Tokyo: Rokkō Shuppan, 1976), and “Natabori butsuzō ron: Natabori no hassei ni kansuru shiron,” *Bukkyō geijutsu*, no. 85 (1972): 32–44; and Nakano Tadaaki, “Natabori butsu tsuikō,” *Shiseki to bijutsu* 480 (1977): 362–68.
- 60 Tsuda, “Iwate Daikōji no Yakushi,” 118.
- 61 Ibid., 119.
- 62 For the appearance of the Central Hall Yakushi images, see *Keiran shūyōshū*, in *T* 76:2410, 851b.
- 63 See Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 3, pl. 123.
- 64 Neil McMullin, “The Enryakuji and the Gion Shrine-Temple Complex in the Mid-Heian Period,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 14, nos. 2–3 (1987): 165.
- 65 Kakujō was the successor to the master sculptor Jōchō (d. 1057). Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi*, 130–31.
- 66 Ibid., 129.
- 67 Ibid., 133.
- 68 A *shū hanjōroku* image is half the size of a *shū jōroku* image. The *shū jōroku* measurement was based on the “*shaku*” used in China’s Zhou dynasty (1045–256 BCE), which corresponded to approximately 7 *sun*, 5 *bu* (or approximately 22.7 centimeters); so a *shū jōroku* image based on the Zhou *shaku* would be roughly 363.6 centimeters. Half of this would then be 181.8 centimeters. See Tokyo Bijutsu, ed., *A Dictionary of Japanese Art Terms* (Tokyo: Tokyo Bijutsu, 1990), 294.
- 69 Itō, *Heian jidai chōkokushi*, 134.
- 70 Myōkai was appointed the thirty-second abbot of Enryakuji in 1053 (or 1054, according to certain sources).
- 71 *Fusō ryakki*, fasc. 29, in *KT* 12, 300.
- 72 See Morse, “Formation of the Plain-Wood Style,” 150. For information on the *Daijō zōzō kudoku-kyō*, see Mochizuki Shinkō, *Mochizuki bukkyō dajiten*, vol. 4 (Tokyo: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai, 1954–1958), 3277b.
- 73 An additional *shū hanjōroku* Yakushi image that I suspect is linked to the Saichō-Enryakuji lineage is the standing Yakushi icon from Shōnenji in Shiga Prefecture. The Shōnenji image is 215.3 centimeters tall, and although it is now a plain-wood image, thin traces of polychrome remain in a few areas, suggesting that the icon was once painted. An inscription in the inner cavity includes a date of Enkyū 6 (1074), indicating that the image is a work of the late eleventh century. See the entry on the Shōnenji Yakushi image by Takanashi Junji in Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 4, 350.
- 74 On the Tōkōin sculptures, see Fukuoka City Art Museum, ed., *Tōkōin no bukkyō bijutsu* (Fukuoka: Bunken Shuppan, 1985).
- 75 For reasons that are unclear, one of the resident monks set fire to the temple in the Kan’ei era. Ibid., 74.
- 76 Tanabe Takao, “Tōkōin no bukkyō bijutsu,” in *Tōkōin no bukkyō bijutsu*, 78.
- 77 The medicine jar; both hands, wrists, ankles, and feet; and the lotus pedestal and mandorla are all later replacements from the Taishō era (1912–1926). Ibid.
- 78 For a more complete examination of the historical documents related to Tōkōin, see *Tōkōin no bukkyō bijutsu*, 104–5. To reconstruct a general history of the temple, historians have primarily relied upon four records: *Chikuzen kuni zoku fudoki* (1709), *Daijōkan naishi* (1838), *Chikuzen kuni zoku fudoki jūki* (1861–1864), and *Rurikōzan Tōkōin Yakuōmitsuji dairyaku engi* (late Edo period).
- 79 Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 8, 254.
- 80 Excerpt from *Rurikōzan Tōkōin Yakuōmitsuji dairyaku engi*, reprinted in *Tōkōin no bukkyō bijutsu*, 105.
- 81 Tōkōin changed sectarian affiliation during its history, from Tendai to Rinzai Zen in the Muromachi period (1392–1573), and to Shingon in the Edo period. The original name of the temple at the time of its founding was Katakasuzan Yakuōji; it was renamed Yakuōmitsuji Tōkōin when it became a Shingon temple. Tasaka Daizō, “Tōkōin jishi,” in *Tōkōin no bukkyō bijutsu*, 74.
- 82 Ibid., 77.
- 83 Takanashi Junji, who wrote the entry on the Jūmanji Yakushi image, has identified the wood as *keyaki*; in Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 4, pl. 365.
- 84 Ibid.
- 85 The “recycling” of Buddhist icons by replacing the hands (and thereby the *mudrās*) and thus changing the identities of the images was common practice. This phenomenon is apparent with Amida statues that were formerly Yakushi figures. For example, the standing Amida statue at Jionji, Mie Prefecture, dated to the early Heian period, was most likely a Yakushi originally. See Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 7, 50.
- 86 Uno Shigeki, *Ōmiji no chōzō* (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 1974), 124.
- 87 Mōri, “Tendai chōkoku no shujusō,” 212; Shimizu Zenzō, “Tendai no Yakushizō,” *Nihon bijutsu kōgei*, December 1974: 35–36.
- 88 See Shimizu, “Tendai no Yakushizō,” 35; and Mōri, *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi no kenkyū*, 128, for a discussion of Tendai-style Yakushi images. See also Sherry D. Fowler, *Murōji: Rearranging Art and History at a Japanese Buddhist Temple* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2005), 144–53, 176–80, for a detailed English discussion of this image; and Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 6, pl. 190, for a photograph.
- 89 Fowler, *Murōji*, 144–45.
- 90 Ibid., 136, 175; Washizuka Hiromitsu, *Nihon no koji bijutsu*, vol. 13, *Murōji* (Osaka: Hoikusha, 1991), 63.
- 91 Shimizu, “Tendai no Yakushizō,” 35.
- 92 Ibid., 36.
- 93 Mōri, *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi no kenkyū*, 124; Shimizu Zenzō, “Enryakuji ni okeru Tendai bijutsu no tenkai,”

- in *Bukkyō bijutsushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1997), 264.
- 94 Wake no Hiroyo and Matsuna were sons of Wake no Kiyomaro (733–799), one of Emperor Kanmu's trusted advisors, who was instrumental in the decision to move the capital to Heiankyō. The Wake clan was one of the most influential political families serving Kanmu's court in the late eighth century.
- 95 Mōri, *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi no kenkyū*, 125.
- 96 Fowler, *Murōji*, 148–49. Ken'e's life dates are unknown.
- 97 On *renpashiki*, see Kanamori Jun, “*Murōji kondō gozō kō*,” *Kokka*, no. 584 (1939): 203–9.
- 98 Shimizu Zenzō, *Heian chōkokushi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1996), 94.
- 99 Shimizu, *Heian chōkokushi*, 95. For Mōri Hisashi's interpretation of the *mudrā* formed by this image, see “The Mystery of the Mudrās” earlier in this chapter.
- 100 See Chapter Two for Yakushi and *keka* rites, and Chapter Three for standing Yakushi images and mountain ascetics.
- 101 *Kaichō* (literally, “opening of the curtains”) is the temporary unveiling and public display of a religious icon. On *kaichō*, see Yuasa Takashi, “Edo no kaichō ni okeru jūhachiseiki kōhan no henka,” *Kokuritsu minzoku hakubutsukan kenkyū hōkoku* 33 (1991): 171–90; Barbara Ambros, “The Display of Hidden Treasures: Zenkōji’s *Kaichō* at Ekōin in Edo,” *Asian Cultural Studies* 30 (March 2004): 1–26; and Nam-lin Hur, “Invitation to the Secret Buddha of Zenkōji: *Kaichō* and Religious Culture in Early Modern Japan,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 36, no. 1 (2009): 45–63. The year 806 is considered the date when Emperor Kanmu’s court officially recognized Saichō’s Tendai Lotus School, with the granting of two annual ordinands for the school.
- 102 “Hieizan: Nihon bukkyō no bozan,” special issue, *Bessatsu taiyō* (April 2006): 12.

## Chapter 5

- 1 For example, see Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, 133.
- 2 Maruo Shōzaburō notes that the medicine jar, left earlobe, fingers of the left hand, the right hand, parts of the hem of the garment, and paint application are all restorations. Maruo Shōzaburō et al., eds., *Nihon chōkokushi kiso shiryō shusei*, *Heian jidai, zōzō meiji hen*, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1966), 4.
- 3 This idea has been suggested by Donald F. McCallum (in private conversation).
- 4 Jingoji’s later affiliation with the Shingon school has obscured this original link to Saichō.
- 5 Wake no Hiroyo’s life dates are unknown. For a good summary of this debate in English, see Morse, “Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji,” 36–55. Morse dates the image between 782 and 793.

- 6 *Ruijū kokushi*, in *KT* 6, 259–60. I would like to thank Drs. William Bodiford, Janet Goodwin, Kuriyama Keiko, Herman Ooms, Lori Meeks, Joan Piggott, and Ms. Rieko Kamei for their suggestions regarding the English translation of this passage, which is provided in the Appendix. *Jōgakuji* were privately founded temples that became recognized and funded by the state during the Heian period. The significance of Jinganji’s status as a *jōgakuji* is examined later in this chapter.
- 7 On the Dōkyō scandal, see Ross Bender, “The Hachiman Cult and the Dōkyō Incident,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 2 (1979): 125–53.
- 8 Kōken, the daughter of Emperor Shōmu and his principal consort, Kōmyō, ruled as empress twice. From 749 to 758, she reigned as Kōken; after Emperor Junnin abdicated in 764, she reigned again as Shōtoku until her death in 770.
- 9 Yokota Ken’ichi, *Dōkyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1964), 153; Bender, “Hachiman Cult,” 138–39, 141; Naoki, “Nara State,” 263–67. The ecclesiastical title of *hōō* was similar to a title of the same name granted to retired emperors who took the tonsure. According to Naoki, the only other person to hold this designation was Prince Shōtoku, who was given the titles “Divine Virtue Buddhist Prince” (*shōtoku hōō*) and “Great Buddhist Prince” (*hōō daiō*). Naoki, “Nara State,” 264.
- 10 Bender, “Hachiman Cult,” 142.
- 11 Ibid., 136. See also Law, “Violence, Ritual Reenactment, and Ideology,” 332.
- 12 Bender, “Hachiman Cult,” 126, 136.
- 13 See Appendix, line 4.
- 14 With Dōkyō’s support, the Usa Hachiman Shrine amassed wealth by receiving grants of land in 764 and 766. Bender, “Hachiman Cult,” 141.
- 15 Appendix, line 4. As Morse states, “The struggle was not merely between Dōkyō and the court bureaucracy; it was also part of a power struggle between native clans; in particular the Fujiwara, who wanted all the political power for themselves; and the immigrant clans, such as the Fujii and the Yuge, who supported Dōkyō.” Morse, “Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji,” 47; see also Bender, “Hachiman Cult,” 144.
- 16 Entry for Jingo Keiun 3 (769).9.25, *Shoku Nihongi*, in *KT* 2, 369.
- 17 See Appendix, lines 6–8.
- 18 Adachi Kō, “Jingoji Yakushizō no zōken nendai,” *Kōkogaku zasshi* 29, no. 12 (1939): 722. Jinganji’s exact location is uncertain. *Jinnō shōtōki* states that the temple was located in Kawachi Province (present-day Osaka), while *Hachiman gudōkin* claims that it was in Yamashiro Province, in present-day Kyoto; the reliability of these fourteenth-century sources, however, is questionable.

- According to Nagaoka, the temple was most likely in the Soeshimo district of Yamato Province, in present-day Nara, where Jinganji owned some land. Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō sairon,” 13. See also Hirano Kunio, *Wake no Kiyomaro* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1964), 207–8.
- 19 Adachi, “Jingoji Yakushizō,” 719–25.
- 20 Mōri Hisashi, Nakano Genzō, and Nagasaka Ichirō all subscribe to the theory that the present Jingoji image was originally the principal icon of Jinganji.
- 21 *Jingoji ryakki*, in *Kōkan bijutsu shiryō*, ed. Fujita Tsuneyo, vol. 2 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1999), 257–78. The passages from *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō* and *Kōnin shizaichō* appear on page 260.
- 22 Fujita, in *Kōkan bijutsu shiryō*, vol. 2, 260.
- 23 Adachi, “Jingoji Yakushizō,” 721.
- 24 Ibid., 722.
- 25 Nakano Tadaaki, “Saisetsu: Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai to seisaku nendai (jō),” *Shiseki to bijutsu*, no. 596 (1989): 249. See also the entry for Enryaku 17 (798).1.20, *Ruijū sandaikyaku*, fasc. 3 (Jōgakuji), in KT 25, 461.
- 26 Nakano, “Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai,” 255.
- 27 This study is the aforementioned “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō.”
- 28 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō sairon,” 14.
- 29 Nagaoka gives another example of an extant asset report known as *Tado Jingūji garan engi shizaichō* (788); as Tado Jingūji was not a *jōgakuji*, Nagaoka states that this inventory was made for the temple’s private use. Ibid., 14–15.
- 30 According to Nagaoka, *Engi shizaichō tokenchakusho senmyō mokuroku*, recorded in *Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō*, lists at least six kinds of asset reports drafted as early as 887. Ibid., 15.
- 31 Ibid., 14–15.
- 32 Ibid., 15.
- 33 Entry for Tenchō 1 (824).9.27, *Ruijū kokushi*, in KT 6, 259.
- 34 Adachi, “Jingoji Yakushizō,” 720.
- 35 Morse, “Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji,” 48. See also *Ruijū sandaikyaku*, in KT 25, 435–36.
- 36 The Council of State directive included in the entry for Tenchō 1 (824).9.27 in *Ruijū sandaikyaku* reads, “Presently, because the temple ground [at Jinganji] is sandy and muddy, we cannot construct a hall for Esoteric ceremonies”; see KT 25, 436. English translation by Morse, “Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji,” 48.
- 37 Nagaoka terms this defilement *kegareru 穢れる*. Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō,” 5. Nagaoka bases his discussion of the notion of *kegare* on Yamamoto, *Kegare to Ōharae*.
- 38 Carmen Blacker, *Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986), 41–42.
- 39 *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, in KT 4, 289. Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō,” 6. *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* is the last of the Six National Histories.
- 40 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō,” 8.
- 41 Ibid. The directive states that the sacred texts and images came from “defilement places” (*aisho*).
- 42 Ibid., 7.
- 43 *Ruijū kokushi*, in KT 6, 258–59.
- 44 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō,” 8.
- 45 Adolphson, “Institutional Diversity and Religious Integration,” 220–21.
- 46 Starting in 824 (Tenchō 1), the word *jōgakuji* begins to appear quite frequently in historical sources.
- 47 Specifically, the definition of *jōgakuji* entailed (1) a limited or “determined” number of temples (other than *daiji* and *kokubunji*) funded by the state; (2) a temple that received a “determined” amount of economic aid and supplies from the government, such as cultivated rice fields; (3) a temple at which a “determined” number of state-appointed monks (*kansō*) was placed; and (4) a temple that was recognized by the state, and often granted an official name by the emperor. Nakai Shinkō, “Jōgakuji shikō,” in *Nihon shūkyōshi ronshū*, ed. Kasahara Kazuo Hakushi Kanreki Kinensai, vol. 1 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1976), 139–44.
- 48 Nakano, “Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai,” 254.
- 49 Kūkai’s Shingon initiation rituals (S: *abhiṣeka*) involved the use of two types of mandalas, the Kongōkai (S: *vajradhātu*) and Taizōkai (S: *garbhadhātu*). In these rituals, the recipient pledged to uphold the Esoteric precepts, and also identified his or her personal tutelary deity on the mandalas. Abé, *Weaving of Mantra*, 43–44.
- 50 Nakano, “Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai,” 255.
- 51 See Appendix, lines 1, 13, and 18; and *Ruijū kokushi*, fasc. 180, in KT 6, 259–60.
- 52 After the temple was renamed Jingoji, its Golden Hall was expanded to a width of five bays and a depth of four bays.
- 53 See *Jingoji ryakki*, quoting *Jōhei jitsurokuchō*, in *Kōkan bijutsu shiryō*, vol. 2, 260.
- 54 For photographs of the Tōshōdaiji images, see *Nara rokudaiji taikan*, vol. 13, *Tōshōdaiji*. See Morse, “Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji,” 38–44, for an excellent portrayal of the Indian sources behind the form of the Jingoji Yakushi icon.
- 55 See Asai, “Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte III,” 4–14; Matsumoto Masaaki, “Kōnin chokoku no kigen,” *Kokka*, no. 721 (1952): 138–47; Nishikawa Shinji, “Ganjin zō to mokuchōgun,” in *Nara no tera*, vol. 20, *Tōshōdaiji* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), 1–16; and Morse, “Standing Image of Yakushi at Jingo-ji,” 38.
- 56 Asai Kazuharu, “Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV,” *Museum*, no. 388 (1983): 21.

- 57 Although Asai does not give a specific example, he is probably referring to something like the marble Buddha (ca. 750) in the Shaanxi Provincial Museum. Asai, “Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV,” 22. See also Nishikawa, “Ganjin zō,” 7, fig. 7.
- 58 Asai, “Jingoji Yakushi sanzonzō o megutte IV,” 22.
- 59 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō sairon,” 11.
- 60 See Morse, “Formation of the Plain-Wood Style,” 116–20.
- 61 For general studies on *danzō*, see Mōri, “Heian jidai no *danzō* ni tsuite”; Kuno, “Danzōyō chōkoku no keifu”; Suzuki Yoshihiro, “Hakuki to *danzō* chōkoku”; and Inoue, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō to sono shūhen.”
- 62 Kaneko et al., “Nihon kodai ni okeru mokuchōzō no jushu to yōzaikan II.” The use of Japanese nutmeg for sculptures was not limited to the Kinki region, but was found in parts of Kyushu and western Honshu as well. As noted in Chapter Two, in regions such as Tōhoku, where Japanese nutmeg did not grow or was scarce, *keyaki* was often employed instead.
- 63 Ibid., 26.
- 64 The only example discovered of a dry-lacquer sculpture with an armature made from Japanese nutmeg is the standing Kannon image from Hōryūji, currently exhibited in the temple’s Treasure Museum (Daihōzōden). Japanese nutmeg was also used for the armatures of the clay bodhisattva statues at Tenpujuji (Ōita Prefecture).
- 65 Kaneko et al., “Nihon kodai ni okeru mokuchōzō no jushu to yōzaikan II,” 11.
- 66 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 168–69; Tsuji Zennosuke, *Nihon bukkyōshi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1960), 268.
- 67 *Taifu*, or “Master,” also may be read as *daifu* or *tayū*.
- 68 *Heian jidaishi jiten*, vol. 2, 2762–63.
- 69 Hirano, *Wake no Kiyomaro*, 208.
- 70 Tsuji, *Nihon bukkyōshi*, 268.
- 71 Nakano, “Jingoji Yakushizō no denrai,” 252.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 8–9.
- 74 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō sairon,” 15–16; entry for Enryaku 18 (799).1.20, *Nihon kōki*, in *KT* 3, 15–16.
- 75 This event, called *Shimotsuki-e*, was a *Lotus Sutra* lecture meeting held at the Great Lecture Hall of Enryakuji for ten days, beginning on 801.11.14. The monks who attended were Shōyū, Hōki, Chōnin, Kengyoku, Saikō, Kōshō, Kanbin, Jikō, Anpuku, and Genyō. The Seven Great Temples of Nara were Tōdaiji, Gangōji, Kōfukuji, Daianji, Yakushiji, Saidaiji, and Hōryūji.
- 76 For further details, see Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 168–70.
- 77 Sonoda Kōyū, for example, has argued that Saichō joined the *Lotus Sutra* Lectures from the fourth month. Sonoda Kōyū, “Saichō to sono shisō,” in *Saichō*, ed. Andō Toshio and Sonoda Kōyū (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1974), 439–515. Saeki Arikiyo has argued that Saichō attended from the first month. *Ibid.*, 173–74.
- 78 The *Lotus Sutra* Lectures resembled doctrinal debates in which participants from different institutions were pitted against each other. *Shōja*, also known as *ryūgi*, were the judges of these debates.
- 79 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 175–76; *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 9.
- 80 Saeki, *Wakaki hi no Saichō*, 172; *Eizan daishiden*, in *Dengyō daishi zenshū*, vol. 5, 9.
- 81 Groner, *Saichō*, 38–39.
- 82 Yiengpruksawan, *Hiraizumi*, 105.
- 83 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō no isō,” 12. *Seireishū* is a ten-volume collection of poems written by Kūkai and compiled by his disciple Shinzei. Volume 6 includes a vow written by Kūkai on behalf of Emperor Junna, who donated ritual implements to Tachibanadera in Yamato Province for the late Prince Iyo. Watanabe Shōkō and Miyasaka Yūshō, eds., *Sangō shiiki, Seireishū*, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 71 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1965), 290.
- 84 Nagaoka, “Jingoji Yakushi nyoraizō sairon,” 16.
- 85 Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 26.

## Chapter 6

- 1 A rite known as *goryō-e* was one such ritual. The first record of a *goryō-e* appears in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* entry for Jōgan 5 (863).5.20, when the ritual was held at Shinsen’en after an epidemic had struck the country and caused many deaths. See Kuroda Toshio, “The World of Spirit Pacification,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23, nos. 3–4 (1996): 323–29.
- 2 Ibid., 250.
- 3 Ennin studied in China between 838 and 847; Enchin, between 853 and 858.
- 4 See Kuno, *Nihon no butsuzō*, vol. 1, pl. 201.
- 5 Recently, the Matsumushidera Shichibutsu Yakushi were shown in the aforementioned exhibition “Faith and Syncretism: Saichō and the Treasures of Tendai”; see Kyoto National Museum and Tokyo National Museum, *Saichō to Tendai no kokuhō*, pl. 113.
- 6 Itō, “Yakushi nyoraizō.”
- 7 For an alternate discussion of the similar iconographical traits seen on the Yakushi images from Shin Yakushiji, Shōjōji, Shōjiji, and Kokusekiji, see my article, “Aura of Seven,” 19–42.
- 8 Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 83–85. As noted in Chapter Four, this set of seven Medicine Buddhas is shown in a diagram of the Central Hall included in *Kuin bukkakushō* (fig. 23).
- 9 Gell, *Art and Agency*, 17–19. See also Daniel Miller, *Materiality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 13.

- 10 Miller, *Materiality*, 13.
- 11 See Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 83–85.
- 12 *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 438. See also *Kuin bukkakushō*, in GR 24, 570b: “The seven [icons] are all the same. They are each two *shaku* high, and are enshrined on altars within the curtains. It is not known who dedicated them.”
- 13 *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 469a: “Concerning the Konpon Chūdō: There are seven of the same Buddha statues. Standing height, two *shaku*. [They are] sandalwood images (*danzō*). It is not known who dedicated the images.”
- 14 *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 510a; Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 93; Shimizu, “Tendai no Yakushizō,” 365; Shimizu, “Enryakuji ni okeru Tendai bijutsu,” 265. The practice of enclosing small, dedicatory icons in the central cavities of larger images—a practice likely adopted from China—became common in Japan by the late twelfth century, but would have been rare in the early Heian period.
- 15 The compiler of *Eigaku yōki* mentions one source that states that it was Enchin who dedicated the Shichibutsu Yakushi. *Eigaku yōki*, in GR 24, 510a. Both *Sanmon dōshaki* and *Kuin bukkakushō*, however, report that the identity of the person who dedicated the images was unknown. *Sanmon dōshaki*, in GR 24, 469a; *Kuin bukkakushō*, in GR 24, 570b.
- 16 Shimizu, *Heian chōkokushi*, 95.
- 17 *Kuin bukkakushō*, in GR 24, 572.
- 18 Mōri, “Genki izen no Enryakuji,” 95–96.
- 19 Paul Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei: Japanese Tendai in the Tenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002), 90–91.
- 20 Hayami Tasuku, *Heian kizoku shakai to bukkyō* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1975), 33–35.
- 21 Ibid. This edict was first passed in Enryaku 4 (785), just a month after Fujiwara no Tanetsugu’s assassination and Prince Sawara’s suicide. Although he may have used political rather than Esoteric means, Tokihira managed to get his rival, Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), demoted to a minor post in Chikuzen Province, effectively exiling him to Kyushu that same year.
- 22 For example, Fujiwara no Korechika (974–1010) clandestinely sponsored a *Daigen hō* (Ritual of the Mystic King Daigensui); see William McCullough and Helen McCullough, trans., *A Tale of Flowering Fortunes: Annals of Japanese Aristocratic Life in the Heian Period*, vol. 1 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 182.
- 23 *Shoku Nihon kōki*, in KT 3, 238.
- 24 Brian Ruppert, “Ocean of Debt, Waves of Chattel: Buddhists and Society in Early Medieval Japan” (unpublished manuscript).
- 25 Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, 72, 92–94.
- 26 Groner, *Ryōgen and Mount Hiei*, 88.
- 27 Ibid., 67. Tadahira, a younger brother of Tokihira, was chiefly responsible for developing the infrastructure of the Fujiwara regency, which enabled the northern branch of the family to dominate Japanese court politics and restrict the power of the imperial family.
- 28 For more on the political power exerted by Enryakuji during the Heian and Kamakura periods, see Adolphson, *Gates of Power*.
- 29 *Asabashō*, fasc. 48, in TZ 8, 525c. Kōshi’s life dates are unknown.
- 30 English translation by Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 163, 202. See also T 14:450, 407a, and T 14:451, 415b.
- 31 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 80; entries for Kankō 5 (1008).7.24, 1008.8.2, and Kankō 6 (1009).10.13, Fujiwara no Michinaga, *Midō kanpakuki*, in *Yōmei sōsho*, vol. 1 (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1983), 374, and vol. 2, 33.
- 32 *Shichibutsu Yakushi hō gengyōki*, in *Zoku gunsho ruijū*, vol. 26, 736. The document, adapted from *Mon'yōki* (discussed later in this chapter), dates to the fourteenth century and lists events from 1137 to 1350.
- 33 William H. McCullough, “The Capital and its Society,” in *Cambridge History of Japan*, vol. 2, 150.
- 34 The other three rituals were the *anchin hō*, the *shijōkō hō*, and the *Fugen enmei hō*. The four great rituals performed by the Shingon school were the *Niōkyō hō*, the *Jōukyō hō*, the *Kujakukyō hō*, and the *Shugokokkaikyō hō*.
- 35 On the Phoenix Hall, see, for example, Samuel C. Morse, “Jōchō’s Statue of Amida at the Byōdōin and Cultural Legitimization in Late Heian Japan,” *RES* 23 (Spring 1993): 96–113; and Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, “The Phoenix Hall at Uji and the Symmetries of Replication,” *Art Bulletin* 77, no. 4 (December 1995): 646–72.
- 36 For the Ten Days of Fasting (*Jissainichi*), see McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 514n74.
- 37 Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 88.
- 38 Yiengpruksawan, “Phoenix Hall,” 652.
- 39 Shimizu Hiroshi, *Heian jidai bukkyō kenchikushi no kenkyū: Jōdokyō kenchiku o chūshin ni* (Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Bijutsu Shuppan, 1992), 59.
- 40 The nine Amida statues at Jōruriji near Nara comprise the only extant example of *kutai Amida* from the Heian period.
- 41 Morse, “Jōchō’s Statue of Amida,” 101.
- 42 G. Cameron Hurst III, “Michinaga’s Maladies: A Medical Report on Fujiwara Michinaga,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, no. 1 (1979): 104.
- 43 As discussed in Chapter Two, vengeful spirits were often seen as the cause of disease and illness, which may explain why the Fudō Rite (*Fudō hō*) was often

- performed when a court member was ill. Michinaga, in particular, favored the Five-Platform Ceremony (*godan hō*) for curing his ill health. Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, 89.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., 92–94.
- <sup>45</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 1, 182. For Daigensui (S: Ātāvaka), one of the eight great acolytes of Vaiśravaṇa, see Louis Frédéric, *Buddhism, Flammarion Iconographic Guides* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995), 215.
- <sup>46</sup> According to *Eiga monogatari*, Korechika cast a curse on Fujiwara no Senshi (962–1002), his own aunt and consort of Emperor En'yū (r. 969–984). McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 1, 187.
- <sup>47</sup> Mimi Hall Yiengpruksawan, “The Eyes of Michinaga in the Light of Pure Land Buddhism,” in *The Presence of Light: Divine Radiance and Religious Experience*, ed. Matthew T. Kapstein (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 246.
- <sup>48</sup> Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, 89. The *Fudō hō*, for the purpose of expelling evil influences (*jōbuku*), was probably developed during the mid-tenth century; the Five-Platform Ceremony was also developed at this time.
- <sup>49</sup> Note that this plan of Hōjōji is different from the plan given in Mason, *History of Japanese Art*, 141, fig. 171; and Cambridge History of Japan, vol. 2, 178, fig. 2.6. I use the Hōjōji plan proposed by Shimizu, *Heian jidai bukkyō kenchikushi*, fig. 2-1-4.
- <sup>50</sup> Hurst, “Michinaga’s Maladies,” 110.
- <sup>51</sup> Shimizu, *Heian jidai bukkyō kenchikushi*, 43, 65. *Muryōju*, “Immeasurable Life,” is one Japanese translation of certain Sanskrit terms related to Amida and his Pure Land (S: *Sukhāvatī*). Similarly, *Jōruri* denotes Yakushi’s Lapis Lazuli Pure Land.
- <sup>52</sup> Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 155.
- <sup>53</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 564.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid., 571. See also Yiengpruksawan, “Phoenix Hall,” 651.
- <sup>55</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 579.
- <sup>56</sup> Entry for Kannin 4 (1020).12.21, *Nihon giryaku*, in *KT* 11, 255.
- <sup>57</sup> Lori Meeks, “Vows for the Masses: Eison and the Popular Expansion of Precept-Conferment Ceremonies in Pre-modern Japan,” *Numen* 56 (2009): 10.
- <sup>58</sup> Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 88.
- <sup>59</sup> T 14:450, 406b. The *Yakushi Sutra* states, “If they hear the name of the Lord Master of Healing, the Lapis Lazuli Radiance Tathāgata, then when they reach the end of their spiritual lives, eight great Bodhisattvas will ascend through space using their spiritual powers, and they will come to point the route [to the Western Paradise]. In that [Western] realm, they will be spontaneously reborn in multi-colored jeweled flowers.” Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 159.
- <sup>60</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 560.
- <sup>61</sup> *Konjaku monogatarishū*, fasc. 12, no. 23, in *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 24 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), 162. More than one thousand folkloric tales from India, China, and Japan are collected in *Konjaku monogatarishū*. See also Nishio, *Yakushi shinkō*, 90–91.
- <sup>62</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 564–67. *Inufusegi* are lattice barriers that divide the inner and outer sanctuaries in a temple hall.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid., 500.
- <sup>64</sup> Mōri, *Nihon bukkyō chōkokushi no kenkyū*, 180. Jōchō may have been Kōjō’s son.
- <sup>65</sup> The one extant statue that Kōjō may have created is the seated Fudō image at Dōjuin, Kyoto. Mizuno Keizaburō, “Daibusshi Jōchō,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 164 (January 1980): 61–62.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid., 47–48; Nakano Genzō, “Fujiwara chōkoku,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 50 (July 1970): 34–51.
- <sup>67</sup> Mizuno, “Daibusshi Jōchō,” 53.
- <sup>68</sup> Ibid., 50. A Sanmaidō is a hall for the exposition of the *Lotus Sutra*.
- <sup>69</sup> Ibid., 48–49.
- <sup>70</sup> Mizuno surmises that Kōjō had probably died by this time, as his name ceases to appear in the written records. Ibid., 51. The titles *hōkkyō*, *hōgen*, and *hōin* (Dharma Seal Master) were awarded more commonly to sculptors in the twelfth century.
- <sup>71</sup> For details on the Byōdōin Amida, see Morse, “Jōchō’s Statue of Amida”; and John M. Rosenfield, *Portraits of Chōgen: The Transformation of Buddhist Art in Early Medieval Japan* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2011), 129–34.
- <sup>72</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 500.
- <sup>73</sup> According to Mōri, the term *kōshō* denotes an artisan, such as a carpenter or sculptor. Mōri Hisashi, *Busshi Kaikei ron* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1961), 127–28.
- <sup>74</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 622.
- <sup>75</sup> Ibid., 623. See also the entry for Manju 1 (1024).6.26, Fujiwara Sanesuke, *Shōyūki*, in *Zōho shiryō taisei, bekkan*, ed. Zōho Shiryo Taisei Kankōkai (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1980), 20; and *Yakushidō kuyōki*, in *GR* 24, 271–72.
- <sup>76</sup> McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, 628.
- <sup>77</sup> The *Kannon-kyō*, or *Kannon Sutra*, is the twenty-fifth chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*, in which Shaka expounds the virtues of the six manifestations of Kannon (Roku Kannon). The six Kannon came to be worshipped by both the Shingon and Tendai schools.

- 78 Shimizu, *Heian jidai bukkyō kenchikushi*, 62–64.
- 79 Yiengpruksawan, “Eyes of Michinaga,” 243–44.
- 80 Ibid., 245.
- 81 Hayami, *Heian kizoku shakai*, 92, 102n85.
- 82 McCullough and McCullough, *Tale of Flowering Fortunes*, vol. 2, 763.
- 83 The records included in *Mon'yōki* span roughly three hundred years, from Ten'ei 1 (1110) to Ōei 23 (1417), and list Esoteric rituals and ceremonies performed at Shōren-in during this period.
- 84 *Asabashō*, fasc. 48, in TZ 8, fig. 6. Diagrams provided in *Mon'yōki* are similar to this version in *Asabashō*, with minor differences in the placement of the smaller altars.
- 85 For a detailed explanation of this deity, see Frédéric, *Buddhism*, 268; and Bernard Faure, “The Elephant in the Room: The Cult of Secrecy in Japanese Tantrism,” in *The Cult of Secrecy in Japanese Religion*, ed. Bernard Scheid and Mark Tweeuwen (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 255–68.
- 86 Faure, “Elephant in the Room,” 257.
- 87 For the identities of the Twelve Divine Generals, see Frédéric, *Buddhism*, 114. Some of the names vary slightly depending on the texts in which they appear. See also Nakano Teruo, “Jūni Shinshōzō,” in “Jūni Shinshō,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 381 (February 1998): 20–21.
- 88 Nakano, “Jūni Shinshōzō,” 20. *Yakushi nyorai kōshiki*, T 84:2722.
- 89 Entry for Kōji 2 (1143).4.10, *Mon'yōki*, in TZ 11, 107b,c, 108a.
- 90 Nedachi Kensuke, “Go-Shirakawa, Go-Toba inseiki no kobutsu shiyo o megutte,” in *Nihon chūsei no busshi to shakai* (Tokyo: Hanawa Shobō, 2006), 235.
- 91 Entry for Hōen 7 (1141).5.29, *Mon'yōki*, in TZ 11, 105a,b.
- 92 This process of circumambulation is described in *Mon'yōki* for the ceremony held on 1143.4.10.
- 93 When *gokaji* was performed for the sake of the emperor, the rite was known as *gyoi kaji* (Consecration of the Imperial Robes).
- 94 Another rite that incorporated *gokaji* was the Latter Seven-Day Ritual (*go-shichinichi mishihō*) of the Shingon school; for more information on this rite, see Brian Ruppert, *Buddha Relics and Power in Early Medieval Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000), 102–41.
- 95 Entry for Kōji 2 (1143).4.10, *Mon'yōki*, in TZ 11, 108a.
- 96 Entry for Kyūan 3 (1147).6.17, *Mon'yōki*, in TZ 11, 109c.
- 97 Yamamoto Hiroko, “Shirei tachi no sekai: Chūsei Eizan no Jūni Shinshō o megutte,” in “Jūni Shinshōzō,” *Nihon no bijutsu*, no. 381 (February 1998): 96.
- 98 Birnbaum, *Healing Buddha*, 208. Details of the *kessen hō* are also outlined in *Asabashō*, fasc. 47, in TZ 8, 333a.
- 99 *Ishiyamadera engi emaki*, fasc. 2, section 6, in *Nihon emaki taisei*, ed. Komatsu Shigemi, vol. 18 (Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1978), 22–23. Rekikai's life dates are unknown, but he studied under the Shingon monk Shōbō (832–909) and later became a Tōdaiji priest.
- 100 Buddhist Text Translation Society, trans., *Medicine Master Sutra: A Simple Explanation by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua* (Burlingame, CA: Buddhist Text Translation Society, 1997), 173.
- 101 Yamamoto, “Shirei tachi no sekai,” 97; *Asabashō*, fasc. 46, in TZ 8, 336b.

## Epilogue

- 1 Carl Knappett, “Photographs, Skeuomorphs and Mariettes,” 98.
- 2 Ibid., 100.
- 3 For this idea of religious communities objectifying authority through the use of material things, see Matthew Engelke, “Sticky Subjects and Sticky Objects: The Substance of African Christian Healing,” in *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 118–39.
- 4 Eifukuji temple pamphlet, purchased on site in June 2010.
- 5 Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, 15.
- 6 Davis, *Lives of Indian Images*, 260.
- 7 Eifukuji's temple pamphlet notes several versions of this folktale, with slight variations. In another version, the townspeople demanded that Zenkō open the box containing the octopus. When the monk opened it, the box instead contained eight sutra scrolls, which later transformed themselves back into an octopus after the townspeople left.
- 8 Eifukuji was first located in the Nijō Muromachi district of Kyoto before it was transferred to its current location on Shin Kyōgoku-dōri.
- 9 Sharf and Sharf, *Living Images*, 15.
- 10 Ibid., 8.

## Appendix

- 1 For the naming of the Jingo keiun era and its relevance to Dōkyō, see Bender, “Hachiman Cult,” 142; and Yokota, *Dōkyō*, 158.
- 2 According to Morohashi Tetsuji's *Dai kan-wajiten*, Genko (C: Xuanhu) refers to a mountain located in Shaanxi Province (west of Luonan); in the context presented here, it denotes the emperor's residence. Morohashi Tetsuji, *Dai kan-wajiten*, revised edition, vol. 7 (Tokyo: Taishūkan Shoten, 1984), 796.
- 3 Here, “the wicked” probably refers to the gods that had received “improper offerings” from Dōkyō.
- 4 This refers to the *Konkōmyō Saishō-kyō* (Victorious Kings of the Golden Light Sutra), which states that the Four Guardian Kings protect the ruler who presides

- over his country in the proper fashion. See *Nichi-Ei bukkyō jiten/Japanese-English Buddhist Dictionary* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1991), 201–2.
- 5 One of Emperor Kōnin's posthumous names, also read as Nuchi-no-Tahara-no-Sumera-Mikoto.
- 6 Emperor Kōnin died in 781.
- 7 The content of the corresponding passage in *Ruijū sandaikyaku* is almost identical to the version from *Ruijū kokushi*. The passage in the former is found in chapter

two, and titled “The matter concerning *nembun dosha* (yearly ordinands).” Only slight differences in content are apparent when comparing the two passages. For example, line 13 of the *Ruijū sandaikyaku* version lists the number of monks to be appointed for Jingoji as twenty-seven, rather than *Ruijū kokushi*'s seventeen, which may be an error in transcription. See *Ruijū sandaikyaku*, in *KT* 25, 435–36.

# List of Characters

*aisho* 穢所  
*aitai* 相替  
*Aizu* 会津  
*ajari* 阿闍梨  
*Akita* 秋田  
*Amida* 阿弥陀  
*anchin hō* 安鎮法  
*An'e* 安慧  
*an-i-in* 安慰印  
*Anjōji garan engi shizaichō* 安祥寺伽藍緣起資材帳  
 An Shigao 安世高  
*Asabashō* 阿娑縛抄  
*Asuka* 飛鳥  
*Atagosan* 愛宕山  
*Ate Shinnō* 安殿親王  
*Awaji* 淡路

*bansō* 伴僧  
*bengara* 弁柄  
*betsuin* 別院  
*bettō* 別當  
*Birushana* 毘盧遮那  
*bodaiji* 菩提寺  
*Bonmō bosatsu kai* 梵網菩薩戒  
*Bonmō-kyō* 梵網經  
*Bonshakuji* 梵釈寺  
*bosatsu kai* 菩薩戒  
*budō karakusa moyō* 葡萄唐草模様  
*bunjin* 分身  
*Bussetsu shari hotsu keka-kyō* 仏說舍利弗悔過經  
*Butsuzō insō daijiten* 仏像印相大辞典  
*byakudan* 白檀  
*byakuqō* 白毫  
*Byōdōin* 平等院  
*Byōdōji* 平等寺

*Chang'an* 長安  
*chikichijō-in* 智吉祥印  
*Chikuramachi* 千倉町  
*Chikuzen* 筑前  
*Chikuzen kuni zoku fudoki* 筑前国続風土記  
*Chikuzen kuni zoku fudoki jūki* 筑前国続風土記拾遺  
*chō* 町  
*chōdō keishiki* 長堂形式

*chōfu* 調綿  
*Chōkaisan* 烏海山  
*Chōkōji* 長光寺  
*Chōnen* 喬然  
*dai ajari* 大阿闍梨  
*Daianji* 大安寺  
*Daibutsuden* 大仏殿  
*Daichi do ron* (C: *Dazhi du lun*)  
     大智度論  
*daidan* 大壇  
*daie* 大衣  
*Daigakuryō* 大學寮  
*Daigen hō* 太元法  
*Daigensui* 太元帥  
*Daigoji* 醍醐寺  
*Dai hannya-kyō* 大般若經  
*daiji* 大寺  
*Daijō zōzō kudoku-kyō*  
     大乘造像功德經  
*Daikōji* 大光寺  
*Dainichi* 大日  
*Dairenji* 大蓮寺  
*dairi* 内裏  
*daitoku* 大德  
*Daiunji* 大雲寺  
*Dajōkan* 太政官  
*dajōkanpu* 太政官符  
*danka mon* 团花文  
*danzō* 檀像  
*Daoxuan* 道宣  
*Denjutsu issinkaimon*  
     伝述一心戒文  
*denkaishi* 傳戒師  
*Dewa* 出羽  
*Dharmagupta* 達摩笈多  
*Dōchū* 道忠  
*doen* 度縁  
*Dōjuin* 同聚院  
*Dōkyō* 道鏡  
*dōshi* 導師  
*Dōshō* 道昌  
*dōtatsu* 堂達  
*Edo* 江戸  
*Eifukuji* 永福寺  
*Eikonji* 榮根寺  
*Eiga monogatari* 荒華物語  
*Eigaku yōki* 歡岳要記

*Eizan daishiden* 敘山大師傳  
*ekijin* 疫神  
*Emishi* 蝦夷  
*Enchin* 円珍  
*Enchō* 円澄  
*Endon bosatsu kai* 円頓菩薩戒  
*engi* 縁起  
*Engi shizaichō tokenchakusho*  
     senmyō mokuroku  
     縁起資材帳図券勅書宣命目録  
*Enichiji* 恵日寺  
*Enmei Hōshi* 円明法師  
*Ennin* 円仁  
*En no Gyōja* 役行者  
*Ennyo* 円如  
*Enryaku* 延暦  
*Enryakuji* 延暦寺  
*Enryakuji kenritsu engi*  
     延暦寺建立縁起  
*Ensai* 延最  
*Enshū* 円修  
*Faquan* 法全  
*Fudō hō* 不動法  
*Fudō Myōō* 不動明王  
*Fugen* 普賢  
*Fugen enmei hō* 普賢延命法  
*Fujiwarakyō* 藤原京  
*Fujiwara no Fuhito* 藤原不比等  
*Fujiwara no Hirotsugu* 藤原広嗣  
*Fujiwara no Korechika* 藤原伊周  
*Fujiwara no Michinaga* 藤原道長  
*Fujiwara no Morosuke* 藤原師輔  
*Fujiwara no Otomuro* 藤原乙牟漏  
*Fujiwara no Shōshi* 藤原彰子  
*Fujiwara no Tabiko* 藤原旅子  
*Fujiwara no Tanetsugu* 藤原種継  
*Fujiwara no Tokihira* 藤原時平  
*Fujiwara no Yorimichi* 藤原頼通  
*Fujiwara no Yukinari* 藤原行成  
*Fukūkenzaku Kannon*  
     不空羈索觀音  
*fuku renpashiki* 複連派式  
*Fukuoka* 福岡  
*Fukushima* 福島  
*Furuchigō* 古市郷  
*Gakkō* 月光  
*Gakushō meichō* 学生名帳

Gangōji 元興寺  
 Ganjin (C: Jianzhen) 鑑真  
*ganmon* 願文  
 Genbō 玄昉  
 Genbu 玄武  
 Genko (C: Xuanhu) 玄扈  
*Genkō shakusho* 元亨釈書  
 Genmei 元明  
 Genshin 源信  
 Genshō 元正  
*genze riyaku* 現世利益  
 Gion 祇園  
 Gishin 義真  
*gōbuku hō* 降伏法  
 Godaidō 五大堂  
 Godai Myōō 五大明王  
*godan hō* 五壇法  
*gokaji* 後加持  
*gokoku* 五穀  
*goma dan* 護摩壇  
*goryō* 御靈  
*goryō-e* 御靈會  
 Go-Sanjō 後三条  
*goshaku gosun* 五尺五寸  
 Go-Shirakawa 後白河  
 Go-tahara tennō 後田原天皇  
 Gufukuji 弘福寺  
*gumonjihō* 求聞持法  
*gusukukai* 具足戒  
 Gyōbushō 刑部省  
*gyōdō* 行道  
 Gyōgen 行玄  
 Gyōhyō 行表  
*gyo'i* 御衣  
*gyo'i kaji* 御衣加持  
*gyōja* 行者  
  
 Hachiman 八幡  
*haku* (C: *bomu*) 柏 or 柏  
 Hakuhō 白鳳  
*hanjōroku* 半丈六  
 Heiankyō 平安京  
 henzan 偏衫  
 hibutsu 祕仏  
*Hiei daishi gyōshaku*  
     比叡大師行迹  
 Hieizan 比叡山  
 Hieizanji 比叡山寺  
*hinoki* 檜  
 Hirazan 比良山  
*hisashi* 庇  
*hōben* 方便  
*hō-e* 法会  
*hōgen* 法眼

Hōgetsu Chigen Kōon  
*Jizaiō Nyorai*  
     宝月智嚴光音自在王如來  
*hōjin seppō-in* 報身說法印  
*hōjō* 放生  
 Hōjōji 法成寺  
 Hōkai Raion Nyorai  
     法海雷音如來  
 Hōkai Shōshitsu Gishintsū  
     Nyorai 法海勝瑟戲神通如來  
*Hoke-kyō* 法華經  
 Höki 宝龜  
*Hokke hō mandara* 蓮華法曼茶羅  
*Hokke kō-e* 法華講會  
*hōkyō* (or *hokkyō*) 法橋  
 Hömyōji 法明寺  
 Hondō 本堂  
*honganshu* 本願主  
*honpashiki* 翻波式  
*honzon* 本尊  
*hōō* 法王  
*hōō daiō* 法王大王  
 Höōdō 凤凰堂  
 Höōnji 報恩寺  
 Hörinji 法輪寺  
 Höryūji 法隆寺  
 Hosekibe 保積部  
 Hossō 法相  
*hōzō* 宝藏  
 Hui Jian 慧簡  
 Hyōgo 兵庫  
  
 Ibukisan 伊吹山  
*ichiboku* 一木  
*ichijō* 一乘  
 Ichijō 一条  
 Ichijō Chū 一乘忠  
 Ichijō Shikan'in 一乘止觀院  
 Ikaruga 斑鳩  
 Ikarugadera 斑鳩寺  
 Ingen 院源  
*In goshō* 院御所  
 Inoe no Naishinnō 井上内親王  
*inufusegi* 犬防ぎ  
*Ishiyamadera engi emaki*  
     石山寺縁起絵巻  
 Iwate 岩手  
  
 Jibushō 治部省  
 Jichin 慈鎮  
 Jien 慈円  
 Jikaku daishi 慈覺大師  
 Jinganji 神願寺  
 Jingoji 神護寺

*Jingoji jōhei jitsurokuchō*  
     神護寺承平実錄帳  
*Jingoji ryakki* 神護寺略記  
*Jingo Keiun* 神護景雲  
*Jin-gokoku so-Shingon-ji*  
     神護國祚真言寺  
*jingūji* 神宮寺  
*Jinnō shōtōki* 神皇正統記  
*jisaku* 自作  
*jise jukai* 自誓受戒  
*Jissaidō* 十斎堂  
*Jissainichi* 十斎日  
*Jissōin* 実相院  
*Jitō* 持統  
*Jizō* 地藏  
*jōbuku hō* 調伏法  
*Jōchō* 定朝  
*Jōdo* 净土  
*jōe* 净衣  
*jōgakuji* 定額寺  
*Jōgan* 貞觀  
*Jōgū Shōtoku Taishi denho ketsuki*  
     上宮聖德太子伝補闕記  
*jōgyō-sō* 净行僧  
*jōji* 净寺  
*Jōjūji* 常住寺  
*Jōmyōji* 净妙寺  
*jōroku* 丈六  
*Jōruriin* 净瑠璃院  
*Jōruri jōdo* 净瑠璃淨土  
*Jōukyō hō* 請雨經法  
*Jōyō-shi* 城陽市  
*Jūichimen Kannon* 十一面觀音  
*Jūichimen shinju shingyō gisho*  
     十一面神咒心經義疏  
*Jūmanji* 充滿寺  
*Jūni Shinshō* 十二神將  
*Jūnen* 十二天  
*Jūnen dan* 十二天壇  
 Junna 淳和  
  
 Kabusan 神峯山  
*kaibyaku* 開百  
*kaichō* 開帳  
 Kai Hōshi (or Bun Hōshi)  
     開法師(聞法師)  
 Kaiyuansi 開元寺  
*kako shichibutsu* 過去七仏  
 Kakujin 覚尋  
 Kakujo 覚助  
 Kakuzen 覚禪  
*Kakuzenshō* 覚禪鈔  
*kami* 神  
*ka mon* 渦文

Kan'eiji 寛永寺  
 Kangiten 歓喜天  
 kan'in 官印  
 kanjō zanmai 灌頂三昧  
 Kankeiji 観慶寺  
*Kankeiji kanjinchō* 観慶寺勸進帳  
 Kanmu 桓武  
 Kannon 觀音  
*Kannon'in* 觀音院  
*Kannon-kyō* 觀音經  
 Kanshū 勸修  
 Kantō 関東  
*karakusa mon* 唐草文  
 Kasagi-chō 笠置町  
*kasha* 火舍  
*kashiwa* 楠  
*katsura* 桂  
 Katsuragisan 葛木山  
 Kawachi 河内  
 Kawaradera 川原寺  
*kaya* 槿  
*kebutsu* 化仏  
*kechien* 結縁  
*kegare* 穢れ  
 Keimyō 慶命  
*Keiran shūyōshū* 溪嵐拾葉集  
 Keisokujī 鷄足寺  
*keka* 悔過  
*keka-sho* 悔過所  
 Kenchō 建長  
 Ken'e 堅恵  
 Kengyō 賢璟  
*kentōshi* 遣唐使  
 Kenzakudō 繢索堂  
*kessen* 結線  
*keyaki* 欅  
 Kibi no Makibi 吉備真備  
 Kichijōten (or Kisshōten) 吉祥天  
*kimon* 鬼門  
 Kinai 畿内  
 Kinpusen 金峰山  
*kirikane* 切金  
 Kitora キトラ  
 Kizugawa 木津川  
 Kōbun'in 弘文院  
*kobutsu* 古佛  
 Kōfukujī 興福寺  
*kōgō* 皇后  
 Kōjō 光定  
 Kōken 孝謙  
 Kokōkaku 己高閣  
*kokubunji* 国分寺  
*kokubuniji* 国分尼寺  
 Kokusekiji 黒石寺

*kokutai* 国体  
 Kokūzō 虚空藏尾  
 Komatsuji 小松寺  
 Kondō 金堂  
*kongō* 金剛  
*Kongō hannya-kyō* 金剛般若經  
 Kongōkai 金剛界  
*Konjaku monogatarishū*  
 今昔物語集  
 Konjiki Hōkō Myōgyō Jōju Nyorai  
 金色宝光妙行成就如來  
 Kōnin (Emperor) 光仁  
 Kōnin (era) 弘仁  
*Kōnin shizaichō* 弘仁資材帳  
 Konkōmyōji 金光明寺  
*Konkōmyō-kyō* 金光明經  
*Konkōmyō Saishō-kyō*  
 金光明最勝王經  
 Konpon Chūdō 根本中堂  
 Konpondō 根本堂  
 Konpon Ichijō Shikan'in  
 根本一乘止觀院  
 Kōryūji 広隆寺  
*Kōryūji engi* 広隆寺緣起  
 Kōshi 康子  
*kōshō* 工匠  
 Kōshū 光宗  
*kōsō* 好相  
 Kōyasan 高野山  
*Kuchizusami* 口遊  
*Kuin bukkakushō* 九院仏閣抄  
*Kujakukyō hō* 孔雀經法  
 Kūkai 空海  
*kun* 裙  
*Kusakabe no Ōji* 草壁皇子  
*kutai Amida* 九体阿弥陀  
*kuyō-e* 供養會  
*kyōgyō* 教行  
*Kyōkai* (or *Keikai*) 景戒  
*Kyōō Gokokuji* 教王護國寺  
*kyōzō* 経藏  
 Kyushu 九州  
  
 Longxingsi 竜興寺  
  
*mappō* 末法  
 Matsumushidera 松虫寺  
*Menju kuketsu* 面授口訣  
 Mimurododera 三室戸寺  
 Minamoto no Rinshi 源倫子  
 Minamoto no Tamenori 源為憲  
 Minbushō 民部省  
 Miroku 弥勒  
*misogi* 御衣木

Mitsu no Obito Momoe  
 三津首百枝  
 Monju 文殊  
 Monjudō 文殊堂  
*Monju hachiji hō* 文殊八字法  
 Mononobe 物部  
 Montoku 文德  
*Mon'yōki* 門葉記  
 Moto Gangōji 本元興寺  
 Mudōji 無動寺  
 Murō 室生  
 Murōji 室生寺  
 Muryōjuin 無量寿院  
*musha dai-e* 無遮大会  
 Mutsu 陸奥  
 Muyū Saishō Kisshō Nyorai  
 無憂最勝吉祥如來  
 Myōhōin 妙法院  
 Myōhōzan Kokusekiji  
 妙法山 黒石寺  
*myōjō* 明星  
 Myōkai 明快  
  
 Nagaokakyō 長岡京  
*naijin* 内陣  
 Nakatomi Suge no Asomaro  
 中臣習宜阿曾麻呂  
 Nakatsukasashō 中務省  
*Namu Yakushi butsu*  
 南無藥師佛  
 Naniwa 難波  
 Nankōbō Tenkai 南光坊天海  
 Nara 奈良  
*natabori* 鉛彫  
*nenbun dosha* 年分度者  
 Nigatsudō 二月堂  
*Nihon giryaku* 日本記略  
*Nihon kōki* 日本後記  
*Nihon ryōiki* 日本靈異記  
*Nihon sandai jitsuroku*  
 日本三代実錄  
*Nihon shoki* 日本書記  
*nikkei* 肉髻  
 Nikkō 日光  
 Ninchū 仁忠  
 Ninmyō 仁明  
 Ninnaji 仁和寺  
*Ninnō-kyō* 仁王經  
*Niō hō* 仁王法  
*Nishino Yakushi/Kannon-dō*  
 西野藥師觀音堂  
 Nodera Tendaiin 野寺天台院  
 Nukatake 頸田部  
 Nyohō 如寶

Oda Nobunaga 織田信長  
 Ōharae 大祓  
 Ōita 大分  
 Ōjōyōshū 往生要集  
 omaedachi 御前立ち  
 omashi (or onza) 御座  
 Ōmi 近江  
 Ōmonoimi 大物忌  
 Ōnojō Shitennōji 大野城四天王寺  
 onryō 怨靈  
 Osabe Shinnō 他戸親王  
 Ōsumi 大隅  
 Otokunidera 乙訓寺  
 Ōtomo Sukune no Kunimichi  
     大伴宿禰國道  
 Ōtsu 大津  
 Ōuchi Masahiro 大内政弘  
 Ōwa 応和  
 owai (or oe) 汚穢

*raigō* 来迎  
*raigō-in* 来迎印  
*raihai kuyō* 礼拝供養  
*Rakuyō garanki* (C: *Luoyang qielanji*) 洛陽伽藍記  
*reiboku* 靈木  
*reiboku shinkō* 靈木信仰  
 Rekikai 歷海  
*rokki* 六器  
*Ruijū kokushi* 類聚国史  
*Ruijū sandaikyaku* 類聚三代格  
*ruki shizaichō* 流記資材帳  
*Rurikōzan Tōkōin Yakuōmitsuji*  
     *dairyaku engi* 琉璃光山東光院  
     藥王密寺大略縁起  
*ryō* 兩  
 Ryōgen 良源  
*ryūgi* 堅義

*sachūben* 左中弁  
 Saichō 最澄  
 Saidaiji 西大寺  
 Saihokuin 西北院  
 Saji 西寺  
 Sajin 濟信  
 Saitō 西塔  
 Sangatsudō 三月堂  
*sangō* 三綱  
*sanjūni sō* 三十二相  
 Sanmaidō 三昧堂  
*Sanmitsu hōmon* 三密法門  
*Sanmon dōshaki* 山門堂舍記  
 Sawara 早良  
*segan-in* 施願印

*Seireishū* 性靈集  
 Seiryōden 清涼殿  
 Seiryōji 清涼寺  
 Seiwa 清和  
 Sekishinji 石津寺  
*semui-in* 施無畏印  
*sendan* 梅檀  
 Senjudō 千手堂  
*seppo-in* 説法印  
 Sesonji 世尊寺  
*setsuwa* 説話  
*shadei* (or *sadei*) 沙泥  
 Shaka 釈迦  
*Shakke kanpanki* 釈家官班記  
*shaku* 尺  
*shanaqō* 遮那業  
*Shibunritsu* (C: *Sifenlù*) 四分律  
 Shichibutsu Yakushi 七仏藥師  
*Shichibutsu Yakushi hō* 七仏藥師法  
*Shichibutsu Yakushi hō gengyō ki*  
     七仏藥師法現行記  
*Shichikōzan* 七高山  
*Shichikōzan ajari* 七高山阿闍梨  
 Shiga 滋賀  
*Shijō hiketsu* 四帖秘決  
*shijōkō hō* 煥盛光法  
*shika daihō* 四箇大法  
 Shikibushō 式部省  
*Shimohimo-kimi kusamono*  
     下水君雜物  
 Shimotsuke 下野  
*Shimotsuke Yakushiji*  
     下野藥師寺  
*Shimotsuki-e* 霜月会  
 Shingon 真言  
*Shinshin* 真身  
*shinshin kenze* 心身健全  
 Shintō 神道  
 Shin Yakushiji 新藥師寺  
*shippō* 七宝  
 Shirakawa 白川  
 Shishin 四神  
*Shitahino-niimon* 下水新物  
 Shitennō 四天王  
*Shitennōji* 四天王寺  
*shizaichō* 資材帳  
*shō* 少輔  
*shōbō* 正法  
*shobyō heiyu* 諸病平癒  
 Shōchō 承澄  
*shogan jōju* 諸願成就  
*shōgon* (or *sōgon*) 莊嚴  
*shōja* 証者  
*Shōjiji* 勝持寺

Shōjōji 勝持寺  
 Shō Kannon 聖觀音  
*Shoku Nihongi* 続日本記  
*Shoku Nihon koki* 続日本後記  
 Shōmu 聖武  
*Shōnenji* 称念寺  
*shōnenju* 正念誦  
*Shōren'in* 青蓮院  
*Shōryakuji* 正暦寺  
 Shōsan 勝算  
*Shōsōin* 正倉院  
*Shōsōin monjo* 正倉院文書  
 Shōten 聖天  
 Shōtoku 称德  
*Shōtoku hōō* 聖德法王  
*Shōtoku taishi* 聖德太子  
*Shōtoku taishi denryaku*  
     聖德太子伝曆  
*Shōtoku taishi denshiki*  
     聖德太子伝私記  
 Shūen 修圓  
*Shū hanjōroku* 周半丈六  
*Shūkongōshin* 執金剛神  
*shumidan* 須弥壇  
 Shungūbō 春宮坊  
*shūzen* 修善  
 Soeshimo 添下郡  
*Soga no Ishikawa Maro*  
     蘇我石川麻呂  
*Soga no Umako* 蘇我馬子  
*sōgishi* 僧祇支  
*Sōgō* 僧綱  
*Sōjin* 総持院  
*sokusai zōeki* 息災增益  
*Son'en* 尊圓  
*Haku-shirimittara*  
     帛尸梨蜜多羅  
*Sudō Tennō* 崇道天皇  
*Sūfukuji* 崇福寺  
*sugi* 杉  
 Suiko 推古  
*sun* 寸  
 Suō 周防  
 Suzaku 朱雀

*Tado jingūji garan engi shizaichō*  
     多度神宮寺伽藍縁起資材帳  
*taifu* (also *daifu* and *tayū*) 大輔  
*taisha* 大赦  
 Taizhou 台州  
 Taizōkai 胎藏界  
 Takamatsuzuka 高松塚  
*Takano no Niigasa* 高野新笠  
 Takaodera 高雄寺

LIST OF CHARACTERS

Takaosan 高雄山  
 Takaosanji 高雄山寺  
 Takechi Ōdera 高市大寺  
*taku* 澤  
*Ten* 天  
*tenbōrin-in* 転法輪印  
 Tendai 天台  
*tendoku* 転読  
 Tenji 天智  
*tenkyō keka* 転經悔過  
 Tenmu 天武  
 Tenpyō Shōhō 天平勝宝  
 Toba 烏羽  
 Tōdaiji 東大寺  
*Tōdaiji sankai shiishizu* 東大寺山堺四至岡  
*Tōdaiji yōroku* 東大寺要錄  
 Tōeizan Kan'eiji 東叡山寛永寺  
 Tōhoku 東北  
 Tōji 東寺  
 Tōkōin 東光院  
*tokudo kyōgō* 得度經業  
 Tokugawa Tsunayoshi 德川綱吉  
 Tokuitsu (or Tokuichi) 德一  
*ton* 屯  
 Tori Busshi 止利仏師  
 Tōshōdaiji 唐招提寺  
*tosō* 抖擞  
*tsūken* 通肩  
 Uji 宇治  
 Ujibe 宇治部  
 Usa Hachiman 宇佐八幡

Wakasa 若狭  
 Wake no Hiromushi 和氣広虫  
 Wake no Hiroyo 和氣広世  
 Wake no Kiyomaro 和氣清麻呂  
 Wake no Matsuna 和氣真綱  
 Wake no Nakayo 和氣仲世  
*wari-hagi* 割矧  
 Wazuka-chō 和束町  
  
 Xuanfasi 玄法寺  
 Xuanzang 玄奘  
  
*yakunan genjo* 厄難減除  
 Yakuōmitsuji Tōkōin 藥王密寺東光院  
 Yakushidō 藥師堂  
*Yakushi hō* 藥師法  
 Yakushiji 藥師寺  
*Yakushi keka* 藥師悔過  
*Yakushi keka-sho* 藥師悔過所  
*Yakushi-kyō* 藥師經  
*Yakushi nyorai kōshiki* 藥師如來講式  
*Yakushi nyorai nenju giki* 藥師如來念誦儀軌  
 Yakushi Rurikō Nyorai 藥師瑠璃光如來  
*Yakushi rurikō nyorai hongan kudoku-kyō* (C: *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing*) 藥師瑠璃光如來本願功德經  
*Yakushi rurikō shichibutsu hongan kudoku-kyō* (C: *Yaoshi liuliguang*)

*qifo benyuan gongde jing* 藥師琉璃光七仏本願功德經  
 Yakushi shinkō 藥師信仰  
 Yamabe Ō 山部王  
 Yamadadera 山田寺  
 Yamagata 山形  
 Yamaguchi 山口  
 Yamashiro no Ōe no Ō 山背大兄王  
*yamato-e* 大和繪  
*Yasha* 夜叉  
*Yasha dan* 夜叉壇  
 Yijing 義淨  
*Yishimian shen zhou xinjing yi shu* 十一面神咒心經義疏  
*yōfu* 帳布  
 Yokokuraji 橫藏寺  
 Yōmei 用明  
 Yōrō 養老  
*yosegi* 寄木  
 Yuge Ō 由義王  
*yuishiki* 唯識  
 Yuishu 惟首  
  
*zasu* 座主  
 Zenkō 善光  
 Zenkōji 善光寺  
 Zenmyō Kishōō Nyorai 善名吉祥王如來  
*zōhō* 像法  
 Zōitsu Agon-kyō 增一阿含經  
*zoku bettō* 俗別當  
*zuizō* (C: *ruixiang*) 瑞像  
*zushi* 廚子

# Bibliography

## Key to Abbreviations Used in the Notes

GR	<i>Gunsho ruijū</i>
KT	<i>Kokushi taikei</i>
T	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i>
TZ	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō zuzō</i>

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